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Summer Camps

ISRAELI DANCERS RANK HIGH — Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovsky of Israel went into the finals of the Winter Olympics ice dance competition at Salt Lake City ranked sixth, with their best marks in "timing and expression."



Netanyahu proposes exile for PA's Arafat

JERUSALEM — Former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, sounding like a campaigner, says Israel must remove Yasser Arafat and destroy the Palestinian Authority before resuming peace talks.

The Associated Press quoted Netanyahu as not ruling out military action to destroy the PA. He told the news service also that he is comfortable about about challenging fellow Likudnik Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He cited polls showing that Israelis who rejected him for re-election in 1999 now broadly support him.

Netanyahu has been speaking throughout the U.S. and Israel, and has called for removing Arafat as the only way to end terror attacks. He blames Sharon for failure to take that action.

Netanyahu favors exiling Arafat, not physically harming him, he says.

He says Israel could eliminate terrorist bases in the West Bank and Gaza at little cost.

The AP report says he hinted strongly at waging a large-scale military operation.

Sharon rejects the idea of destroying the Palestinian Authority as faulty advice from "self-appointed experts."

Netanyahu opposed the 1993 interim agreements with Arafat's PLO, and had mostly bitter relations with the Palestinians, but did negotiate two interim peace deals and handed over most of Hebron to them.

Seventeen months of fighting have brought Netanyahu's hard-line ideas back to the fore.

If again elected prime minister, he says, he would talk peace only after ending terrorism and would offer far less than his successor Ehud Barak did a year ago — a Palestinian state in almost all of the West Bank and Gaza plus part of Jerusalem.

He says the mistakes he made as prime minister were primarily management errors, not flawed policy.

Dissenting soldiers' movement growing

JERUSALEM — A defiance of the military that began with newspaper ads by 52 reservists last month has mushroomed to embrace more than 200.

The objectors say they will no longer serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The soldiers say the Israel Defense Forces have been committing acts of random brutality toward Palestinian civilians. Their protest has bolstered the resolve of Israeli peace agitators who are now regrouping under the slogan "Get out of the territories." Many are calling for a unilateral Israeli withdrawal rather than waiting for a peace deal.

A recent rally saw an estimated 14,000 Israelis gathered in Tel Aviv to call for the pullout.

The army has usually dealt with conscientious objectors by jailing them for short terms and then transferring them away from the conflict.

The latest objectors include a deputy brigade commander. They have refused to talk to foreign media as a point of loyalty to Israel, but their movement has led many soldiers to speak to Israeli media about doing things of which they are ashamed.

Some reservists regret leaving Palestinian refugees homeless and feel that Israel should not have slain a West Bank militia leader at a time when a truce ordered by Yasser Arafat seemed

Continued on page NAT 4



OUTSPOKEN — One thing Israelis have learned over the years to do effectively is to vent their outrage in demonstrations as this photo shows. This Jerusalem rally was aimed at Arafat and bin Laden.

Lubavitch couple's wedding makes local history

By JENNIE COHEN

Indianapolis saw its first Lubavitch Hassidic wedding ever at the Westin Hotel Downtown, Monday evening, Feb. 11, on Erev Rosh Chodesh Adar—the eve of the first day of the month of Adar on the Hebrew calendar.

Chanie Grossbaum, the eldest of seven children of Rabbi Avrohom and Nini Grossbaum, married Eliezer Zalmanov, son of Rabbi Yisroel and Sara Zalmanov.

Four hundred guests, including approximately 40 Lubavitch Hassidic rabbis from all over the world, took part in this spiritually high celebration. Cae of those dancing at the reception was the great-grandfather of the groom, 102-year-old Rabbi Yehuda Chitrik, born in the city of Lubavitch where this Hassidic tradition began.

It took eight staff members at the hotel and three mashgiachim, those trained to make sure everything is kosher, 24 hours to kasher the kitchen at the hotel. Some of the dishes and silverware and most of the food was brought in from Chicago by Danzinger Kosher Catering.

Chanie came to Indianapolis as a baby with her par-



(left to right) Rabbi Avrohom Grossbaum, father of bride, Mendie Grossbaum, brother of bride, Eliezer Zalmanov, groom and Chanie Zalmanov, bride.

ent almost 20 years ago. Since then her father, Rabbi "Avi" Grossbaum, has built a thriving community that provides a number of different programs. These include camps for children, a calendar and newspaper, Sabbath and holiday celebrations, a kids' book club, a matzoh bakery, counseling, prison chaplaincy and Chabad Houses for Jewish college students in Bloomington and Munster, Ind.

Lubavitch of Indiana has grown so much that last year Rabbi Grossbaum hired Rabbi

Mendel Schusterman to help as director of the children's camps and adult education. The only other Lubavitch family living in Indianapolis is that of David Beddoun who came to work for Eli Lilly.

Events leading up to the wedding began in Tsfat, Israel. Chanie had been studying there at a teacher's seminary for two years. The director of the school was fond of her and wanted her to meet his nephew Eliezer from New York. Eliezer was volunteering in Connecticut where Rabbi Grossbaum's nephew



Nini Grossbaum, mother of the bride and Chanie Zalmanov.

also was volunteering and knew the potential groom. The families of Lubavitch young people help their children find suitable mates. Rabbi Grossbaum checked out the potential groom's family and gave his approval.

Chanie returned to Indianapolis in June to be head counselor at the children's camp. After the high holidays she moved to New York to teach and met Eliezer after Sukkos. Living so far away, Rabbi and Nini Grossbaum had to bide their time while Eliezer courted Chanie. After two months Eliezer proposed and the wedding plans began.

Rabbi Grossbaum explained that in Lubavitch when young people date, the object is matrimony. The conversations revolve around serious matters such as the persons' values, goals and plans for children. The couple never meet privately. Nor do they hold hands or engage in other physical contact throughout the engagement.

After the first meeting, when the couple have returned to their respective homes, each talks to the one who arranged the meeting and tells the matchmaker whether or not he or she would like to meet the other again. The matchmaker then reports back to the individuals with the answer. If one or both decline, the young man and woman no longer see

each other, but each will later be matched with someone else.

If they both agree to meet again it means they were not ready to make a decision and need more time with the other person. This continues usually a few more times until one or both of them decide they don't make a good match or until the young man proposes and the young woman accepts.

Rabbi Grossbaum said this method is less complicated than other dating practices

Continued on next page

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Candlelighting FEBRUARY/MARCH INDIANAPOLIS

February 22nd • 6:11 p.m.

March 1st • 6:19 p.m.

March 8th • 6:26 p.m.

Zalmanov wedding

Continued from prev. page
because if they don't meet again, it is not considered a bad thing. It just means they weren't right for each other. Although they can be counseled, the final decision is totally up to the courting pair.

The Lubavitch Hassidic wedding has some unique rituals that are not practiced in other Hassidic weddings. Some of these include chants, songs, prayers and blessings that were recited and sung by previous Lubavitcher rebbees and their Hassidim going back two-and-a-half centuries.

There also are some wedding rituals common to all Hassidim, but which are not done in non-Hassidic (Reform,

Conservative, Reconstructionist, Modern Orthodox) weddings. These include fasting by the *kallah* (bride) and *chason* (groom) all day before the wedding. The wedding day is like a personal Yom Kippur for the bride and groom, who both wear white, symbolizing a special state

where they have been forgiven for all their past wrongdoing as they begin a new life together. The couple are considered to be like royalty and are always accompanied by an escort from a few days before to a week after the wedding.

Because of the bride's special status on her wedding day, before she weds, her friends and relatives give her petitions to God written on slips of paper. While she is standing under the chuppah pure and sanctified, she is deemed especially close to God and can petition Him to help those people who have revealed to her their challenges.

Before the wedding ceremony, the groom, escorted by his father, future father-in-law, and accompanied by male relatives and friends walks to the room where the bride is being attended by the female relatives and friends. He performs the *bedeken*, veiling of the bride. This tradition of bringing down an opaque

veil over the bride's face is reminiscent of Rebecca in the Bible when she covers her face with a veil before her marriage to Isaac. This provides the bride with complete pri-

vacy so she can say her own personal prayers.

Just after this in a private room, all the knots on the groom's garments are untied. This symbolizes that at the

moment of marriage, all other bonds are eliminated except this intimate one made between him and his bride.

The *unterfirers*, the family
Continued on page 6



Under the chuppah, groom Eliezer Zalmanov receives a blessing from Rabbi Mordechai Ashkenaz, while Rabbi Avrohom Grossbaum listens from behind.

Scott Romer *photography*

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JANUARY 15 - JUNE 9, 2002

Rona's Roving Reports

Pick a Purim carnival and go have some fun

By RONA TRACHTENBERG

Order USY hamantashen
Friday, Feb. 22 is the deadline to order hand-baked hamantashen by United Synagogue Youth (USY) of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck. They are offering poppy seed, apricot, prune and cherry for only \$6 a dozen. Order forms are available at the religious school. Please pre-pay by check when you make your order. The hamantashen will be given out in the evening, during the Purim Carnival, Feb. 25.

Mystery bus ride

On Saturday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m.,

Congregation B'nai Torah is sponsoring a mystery bus ride. The fee is \$10 and includes refreshments. Please RSVP by calling 253-5253.

A woman's view of the Bible

On Sunday, Feb. 24, 10:45 a.m. to noon, Rabbi Sandy Sasso invites Jewish women to study biblical stories about women and learn the answers to the following questions: Who were the women of the Bible? Who were Sarah and Hagar? How do we read these stories in light of our present crisis? What do our traditional

sources tell us?

Discover what resources exist to help us add names, stories and images to the characters who have already shaped who we are as Jewish women. Listen to the voices of the past and create your own midrash.

The program costs \$10/person/member and \$15/person/non-member.

To register, please contact the synagogue office, 253-3441.

Yiddish Club Purim party luncheon

On Sunday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m., at the JCC, the Jules Dorfman Yiddish Club is hosting its 2002 Purim Party featuring a solo concert by the talented young singer Hannah Farahan.

The kosher lunch menu will be roast chicken breast, green beans, sweet potatoes, cake, coffee, Coffee Rich, and tea.

This event is run by Mike Blain and Fay Dorfman.

The cost is \$5. Space is limited, so please RSVP by calling Naomi at the JCC 251-9467, ext. 226.

Jewish singles fitness night

On Sunday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m., the JCC is hosting a Jewish singles fitness night. For details, call Marsha Landau (251-9467, ext. 233) at the JCC.

Purim insights

On Sunday, Feb. 24, 7 - 9 p.m., Congregation B'nai Torah is offering two lectures that explore insights into the joyous holiday of Purim.

Rabbi Shlomo Crandall will speak about "What's with all this drinking on Purim?" He will explain why it is so important that we drink until we don't recognize the difference between Haman and Mordechai.

Rabbi Mendel Schusterman's lecture "Be-

hind the mask" will unveil the mystical concepts in the Megillah.

The community is invited to this free event.

Purim fast

Monday, Feb. 25, is the Fast of Esther. Purim celebrates the day when Jews throughout the Persian Empire were saved from Haman's death decree. To commemorate this miracle, Jews fast and pray from morning until night. Fasting ends at 7:10 p.m.

PURIM MEGILLAH READINGS AND CARNIVALS - Monday, Feb. 25

Congregation Beth-El Zedeck

Megillah reading - 5:45 p.m.
USY Purim Carnival (dinner, games, entertainment, fun for all) - 7 p.m.

Come in costume. Pick-up pre-ordered hamantashen by USY, at the carnival

Check out the Tombola where each entry has the chance to win any one of many prizes donated by local merchants.

Congregation B'nai Torah

Megillah reading - 6:40 p.m.
NCSY Purim Carnival - 8 p.m.

The carnival will feature games, prizes, a clown, a moon-walk, a costume contest, and kosher food to break the fast from the Center Cafe. Free to all.

Congregation Etz Chaim
Megillah reading - 6:15 p.m.
Purim carnival - 7 p.m.

Every child that comes in a costume will get a prize. Homemade hamantashen by Sisterhood.

Congregation Shaarey Tefilla

Purim Pizza Party - 5:15 p.m.

Megillah reading 6 p.m. - by JTS rabbinical student David Weiner

Carnival - 7:30 p.m.
Kosher cheese pizza from New York - \$2 a slice. Incredible carnival prizes and new moon-walk. Come in costume. Home-baked Hamantashen by Sisterhood.

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation

Megillah reading - 6 p.m.
IFTY Purim Carnival and Brotherhood-sponsored dinner - 7 p.m.

Cost for dinner is \$5 per person.

Purim Party at JCC

On Tuesday, Feb. 26, 6 p.m., the Lubavitch of Indiana is hosting its dinner/dance Purim party at the JCC's Laikin Auditorium.

Come in costume. Pre-paid tickets are discounted at \$10 adults and \$5 for children ages 5 to 10 years old. Tickets at the door cost \$12 and \$6, respectively.

Please RSVP by calling 253-Continued on page 6

Summer Camps

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Critic's Corner

Don't Count this movie out

By CHARLES EPSTEIN

Who needs another version of Alexander Dumas' classic novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*? There have been so many motion pictures



made with this exciting theme of revenge. Yet, this latest version with a screenplay by Jay Wolpert is superb, a magnificent spectacle of color and action.

This one stars Jim Caviezel as the starry-eyed dashing young sailor, Edmond Dantes. Others who have portrayed this classic hero have been Richard Chamberlain and Gerard Depardieu, with the most memorable performance given by Robert Donat in the black and white 1934 film. I was surprised when I found Jim Caviezel holding his own, especially as Dantes. His Count could have been more forceful. However, that could be the only flaw this huge production has.

This film is filled with outstanding scenery and performances. It is difficult to relate how beautiful this film is. The

photography is gorgeous. Director Kevin Reynolds chose the location shots very well. Each frame was like a glorious jigsaw puzzle.

The cast was superb, with every actor portraying his or her role exquisitely. Guy Pearce is excellent in his portrayal of Dante's (dis)loyal friend Fernand Mondego. As was Richard Harris as Dantes' instructor in the awful prison Chateau D'If. If there ever was a part for Richard Harris the Abbe Faria seemed written especially for him.

James Frain is one of the villains, the terrible prosecutor Villefort. Albie Woodington is menacing as Danglar. Alex Norton does an admirable job as Napoleon.

Gayle Bette Calderon to be bat mitzvah

On Shabbat, February 22-23, Gayle (Gittel) Bette Calderon will be honored as a bat mitzvah by leading the service, as well as reading from the Torah and Haftarah at Congregation Beth-El Zedek.

Gayle is the daughter of Marlene and Steve Calderon, granddaughter of Frank Zendell and Betty and Irving Calderon.

She explained that her "Torah and Haftarah portions, Samuel and Shmuel, are about

Stunning Dagmara Dominczyk is sweetheart Mercedes.

But the surprise for me was the incredible performance of Luis Guzman as Jacopo. We all know what Luis Guzman looks like but few can put a name to that most familiar face. His role was substantial as the Count's protector. He also was the Count's conscience at times. There are so many more wonderful performers in smaller parts that made this picture so entertaining, such as Henry Cavill as Albert, Patrick Godfrey as Morrell, and the gentlemen who played Corlion and the leader of the saboteurs and pirates whose names I could not discover. These fantastic

actors may not be household names but they are terrific, adding so much to the total enjoyment of the film.

Director Kevin Reynolds collaborated with Andrew Dunn as director of photography. The music by Edward Shearmur was enthralling. There are more staffers I would like to give credit to but space doesn't permit. How-

ever the producers deserve a lot of credit. They are Roger Birnbaum, Gary Barber and Jonathan Glickman.

Needless to say, this latest version of Alexander Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo* was a delightful surprise. I certainly did not expect this motion picture to be so exciting and beautiful at the same time.

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Gayle Calderon

lighting the eternal light." After her bat mitzvah, Gayle will become a valuable member of the Jewish people and a guiding light to her peers. She thanks her parents for instilling in her the desire to reach her goals.

Gayle is a seventh grader at Orchard School, where she enjoys playing softball, volleyball, soccer and tennis. She has won awards for Hebrew and soccer. Gayle's other hobbies

Continued on next page

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- Session #2 July 15th - July 19th
- Session #3 July 22nd - July 26th



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Zalmanov wedding

Continued from page 3

escorting the bride and groom to the chuppah, each carry a lit candle. (The chuppah is always outside under the stars.) One explanation for this custom is that candles are reminiscent of the flickering light and fire that occurred at the marriage of God (the groom) and Israel (the bride) under the "chuppah" of Mt. Sinai at the giving of the Torah.

Hassidic lore teaches also that several generations of departed ancestors of the newly wedded couple descend from the "world of truth" to attend their wedding.

When the bride joins the groom under the chuppah, she circles him seven times. Seven signifies a creative completion, like the seven days of creation, a passage beyond the physical into the spiritual. Just as the seventh day, the Sabbath, completed creation of the world, her circling signifies the couple's completed quest for each other.

After the bride's circling, a letter that the Lubavitcher Rebbe wrote congratulating the bride's parents after their wedding is read. Then the cantor chants a blessing to the bride and groom followed by two benedictions over wine. The groom then gives the bride a ring without engraving or gemstones. Its perfect roundness expresses an unspoken prayer that the marriage will be one of simple beauty, free from strife or conflict. Then the *kesubah*, marriage contract, is read aloud.

In Hassidic tradition, if the *kesubah* is lost, the couple may not live in the same house

until a new contract is drawn up. Finally the recitation of the *sheva berachos*, seven blessings, as at all Jewish weddings.

The first blessing is over the second cup of wine for rejoicing. The second blessing thanks God for creating the world and honors those attending the wedding. The third and fourth acknowledge God's physical and spiritual creation of humans. In the fifth is a prayer for restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Holy Temple. The sixth expresses hope that the newlyweds' love for each other will grow. The seventh blessing is a prayer for the time when the messiah will come and redeem humankind from spiritual exile and peace will reign over the world.

After the breaking of the glass, the last ritual in all Jewish weddings, the bride and groom adjourn to a private room. They share a few moments as husband and wife to break their fast and declare their new, intimate relationship.

During the wedding feast, which is interspersed with singing and dancing, the men and women are separated by a *mechitza*, screen or partition. At the end of the celebration, the grace after meals is recited and the seven blessings that were recited under the chuppah are repeated.

Following the wedding feast, the couple does not go off on a honeymoon, but spend the next seven days in their community being hosted by family and friends with festive meals. Each meal is called "*sheva berachos*" after the seven blessings that were recited under the chuppah.

Jewish giggles

Lost in translation

When America was being settled, a group of people headed West in a wagon train. Their inexperienced leader soon became lost. They were getting desperate when they came over a hill and saw an old Jew sitting beneath a tree.

The leader rushed to the old Jew and said, "We're lost and running out of food. Can you help us?"

The old Jew said, "Mister, all I know is dis. If you go up dat there hill and down other side, I guarantee de'll be a big bacon tree." "A bacon tree?" asked the wagon tree leader. "Yah, ah bacon tree. Trust me. For nuttin vud I lie."

The leader goes back and tells his people that if nothing else, they might be able to find

Jews battle hate in Terre Haute

TERRE HAUTE — United Hebrew Congregation here is in a "Letters-to-the-editor" battle with a Dr. Anil Sarkar, whose vicious letter to the editor was published in The Tribune-Star of Terre Haute Jan. 26.

Sarkar wrote, in part:

"after the Holocaust the Jews needed a homeland but thanks to their powerless god who 'promised the land' to the Jews, could neither deliver it to them nor protect them from Hitler. ... 'We have to accept the truth that if creation of Israel is not a crime then the terrorists are not criminals...'"

Congregation President Herschel Chait noted anti-Israel letters usually are ignored so that responses won't spur more of them, but this time he asked congregants to "be prepared to take up your pen" in response.

In his own response letter Chait said Sarkar's statement that terrorists are not criminals "is a statement that no one in the Palestinian leadership would endorse. ... Mr. Arafat has at least made a public appearance of arresting terrorists and closing terrorist organizations."

Calderon

Continued from prev. page

bies include piano and drawing. She takes excellent care of her dogs, Rosie and Scooby, and aspires to become a veterinarian.

Gayle is eager to see out-of-town relatives and friends from Fort Wayne, Connecticut and Florida.

food on the other side of the next ridge, so the wagon train goes up the hill and down the other side. Suddenly, Indians attack and massacre everyone except the leader, who manages to escape back to the old Jew, who's enjoying a "glassel tea."

The nearly-dead man starts shouting. "You fool! You sent us to our deaths! We followed your instructions, but

there was no bacon tree. Just hundreds of Indians, who killed everyone."

The old Jew holds up his hand and says "Oy, wait a minute." He then gets out an English-Yiddish dictionary, and begins thumbing through it.

"Gevalt, I made myself ah big mistake." "It vuz not a bacon tree. It vuz a ham bush!"

Rona

Continued from page 4

9152.

Tuesday Golden Age Club at JCC

On Tuesday, Feb. 26, the JCC's Golden Age Club will be hosting its on-going Tuesday program featuring an exercise class from 11:30 to noon, followed by a sumptuous kosher lunch of borscht, blintzes, gefilte fish, salad, cake, coffee, milk and tea. The fee for the exercise class is 75 cents and \$1.50 for the lunch. For more information, please contact Lori Moss, adult services director, at the JCC (251-9467).

Thursday Golden Age Club at JCC

On Thursday, Feb. 28, 11 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., the JCC's Golden Age Club will be hosting its on-going Thursday contemporary issues discussion, exercise class and lunch. The kosher lunch menu consists of tuna salad, bagel with cream cheese, fruit salad, coffee, milk and tea. The fee for the exercise class is 75 cents and \$1.50 for the lunch. For more information, please contact Lori Moss, adult services director, at the JCC (251-9467).

New coordinator for Pilder's orders

Pilder's Deli and Bakery is a kosher establishment in Cincinnati. In the past, the owner, Danny Pilder, would drive to Indianapolis bringing kosher

meat to our community.

The task of coordinating orders was previously handled by Tamar David, of the JCC's Center Café. However, due to the demands of her successful business, she is no longer able to provide this service.

The good news is that I, Rona Trachtenberg, will be the new coordinator. Here is how the new program will work. Danny needs a minimum of \$1,000 in total orders to merit the drive to Indianapolis. All you have to do is call (513) 792-9961 or fax (513) 792-9605 him at the store and place your order. He will accept your credit card over the telephone. If you want an updated price list, he will be happy to send you one.

Pilder's is open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday and Thursday; and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday. The store is closed on Shabbat.

When Danny gets enough orders, he will call me with a date and location for delivery. I will be the local liaison to the purchasers and call everyone with the pick-up details.

Hopefully, through this new system, we will create a list of loyal, consistent purchasers and the deliveries will take place on a monthly, timely basis.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me, Rona, at 852-5212.

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Jewish Post & Opinion

Jews have same rights as non-Jews

There must be a way to stop the slaughter of Israelis by the PLO and that could be by defining precisely the area which Israel is willing to provide for a Palestinian state and then withdrawing certain sizeable amounts for each additional Israeli murdered at the hands of the PLO.

Such a drastic step would alter the situation to the point where Mr. Arafat would be forced to find another method to mount his protest at Israel for not withdrawing all the way to the shores of the Mediterranean to satisfy his goal of a Palestine state if not in all of Israel at least Israel with indefensible borders.

As it is while Israel seemingly has the upper hand it has been forced to make concessions because it is bound by humanitarian rules while the PLO believes that the bodies of Israelis should pave the way for his roads which would squeeze Israel into indefensible borders.

In other words it is time for calling a halt to the situation where one side by ignoring the rules of common humanity can take actions while the other can only yield and yield and yield.

And the answer, of course, is with the world at large which must come to the point of realizing that Jews have the same rights as non-Jews and that is the crux of the matter.

Ohio board is at brink of accepting creationism

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The creationist twist to intrusion of religion into public schools has a new twist called intelligent design, which is to be considered by the Ohio Board of Education.

Supporters of this theory acknowledge that the earth is billions of years old, rejecting a literal reading of the Bible, but dispute the idea that the astounding complexity of the earth's plants and animals could have just happened through natural selection, and evolution.

Critics say the change would make Ohio a laughingstock to rival Kansas, where school board members voted in 1999 to delete evolution from the state's recommended science curriculum and standardized tests. The Kansas board was eventually turned out by voters and Kansas restored its evolution teaching.

Opponents of intelligent design view it as a backdoor effort to put religion into the public schools.

The board's science standards subcommittee has scheduled a hearing next month for a debate on intelligent design. Its proponents say evolutionary fact should be supplemented with what they call origins science.

The subcommittee majority leans toward acceptance of the movement, as shown by a recent meeting in which it gave John H. Calvert, a Kansas City lawyer who co-founded Intelligent Design Network, 30 minutes to speak without letting evolution supporters speak in rebuttal.

Supporters of intelligent design claim the support of various academics and scientists, but critics say that testing, not credentials, must ultimately verify any scientist's new claim.

Fleisher adds to bank account

LUTZ, Fla. — Bruce Fleisher tied for third in the Verizon Classic here and his only three strokes more than the winner for his three days

of golfing allowed him to add \$99,000 to a bank account that grows weekend after weekend.

Editor's Chair

We can comprehend why only a few rabbis — Rabbi Lawrence N. Mahrer of Temple Emanu-El in Dothan, Ala., stands out in our memory — have recommended to his or her congregants that they should attend Sabbath services at least once a month. Regular Sabbath service attendance is the goal and obviously rabbis believe that is what their congregants should do, plus that urging at least once a month attendance is a diminution of what Judaism is all about.

Just what has happened in Temple Emanu-El in Dothan as far as participation in Sabbath services once a month we do not know but no other American rabbi has sought to persuade his congregants who do not attend services to attend them at least once a month.

Our promotion is based on the theory that the once a month attendance would almost automatically over a period of time develop into regular Sabbath attendance.

Whether that has been the development in Dothan we do not know. Nor do we know if any other American rabbi has requested that his congregants attend Sabbath services at least once a month.

What we do know is that for those members of congregations who rarely attend Sabbath services the once a month attendance is a gain.

Koran in schools is defamatory

LOS ANGELES — As commentaries in 300 copies of the Koran used by local schools were found to contain anti-Jewish references they have been removed only a week after they had been distributed. One footnote related that "the Jews in their arrogance claimed that all wisdom and all knowledge of Allah were enclosed in their hearts. But there was more things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in their philosophy. The claim was not only arrogance but blasphemy."

The books had been contributed to the school district by the Omar Ibn Khattab Foundation as a "goodwill gesture in response to the September 11 attacks."

We've recommended here that any Sisterhood of any congregation were it to urge its members to begin attending Sabbath services at least once a month the congregation would not only become a pioneer but also would thereby gain attention in history books.

That no other rabbi has followed Rabbi Mahrer's pioneering action is understandable but were a few others to join him (their Sisterhoods also) then our promotion here would be tested in the sense of whether those attending Sabbath services once a month might almost automatically after a short time begin to attend services every Sabbath.

Incidentally Rabbi Mahrer is quite creative. His Temple Emanu-El celebrated at services on Friday, Feb. 15 its seventh annual Neighbor Night when the non-Jewish community is invited to a Sabbath service. In the bulletin he noted that, "I explain the liturgy as it is conducted, comment on our Sanctuary, explain our rituals and our music....In place of a sermon our guests will have the opportunity to ask me questions....I have invited several pastors and directors of Christian education to bring folks from their churches. With your help we will have a full sanctuary for our seventh annual Neighbor Night."

Five rabbis convert most of Uganda's Jews

MBALE, Uganda — It required five rabbis, four Conservative ones from the U.S. and one from Israel, to supervise the four-day conversion of most of 400 of Uganda's 600 male Jews, known as the Abayudaya, over several days. The rabbis were joined by Gershom Sizomu, their spiritual leader who had recently returned from a semester of rabbinical studies at HUC in New York.

The conversion scenario required several days.

There are more men in the community than women with most related so now they can intermarry with Jews from other communities. The males had been circumcised at birth but agreed to undergo "a hatafat dam brit," a symbolic procedure to extract a drop of blood from the penis.

At the end of the last century an American organization called Kulanu, Hebrew for "all of us", that aids dispersed Jewish communities learned about the Abayudaya and has been providing help to them since.

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6. Don't advertise. Forget that you have competition trying to attract your customers away from you.
7. Don't advertise. Tell yourself it costs too much to advertise and that you don't get enough out of it.
8. Don't advertise. Overlook the fact that advertising is an investment in selling — not an expense.
9. Don't advertise. Be sure not provide an adequate advertising budget for business.
10. Don't advertise. Forget that you have to keep reminding your established customers that you appreciate their business.

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More must be demanded of the Conservative Jews

NEW YORK — As Rabbi Judy Yudof took over the reins of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism one view is that the movement appears to be moving to increase demands on congregants while it focuses on a smaller and more committed core.

The five national Conservative bodies that met here for the first time heard speeches focused on requirements and demands. Steven Cohen, sociology professor at the Hebrew University, suggested that higher standards plus greater focus on personal meaning and spirituality will strengthen the Conservative movement.

Citing research that churches that demand more volunteerism and religious proficiency tend to be more vibrant and popular than ones that set lower conditions he said the tendency to demand less is counterproductive.

"At times of high anxiety about Jewish stability and continuity our tendency is to demand less, become less judgmental and more inclusive. But in fact this strategy is counterproductive."

He also took out at synagogue leaders urging them to "become beacons to inspire Conservative Jews to live a more fulfilling and meaningful life. The goal must not be to lower expectations but to create the "bandwagon effect" of commitment to Jewish living — in which we are all involved and growing."

Then there was the view of Rabbi Debra Eisenman of Beth Tikva of West Boca, Fla., who warned that people will rarely become more observant simply because they're commanded. You can say it over and over but they'll do what they want," she concluded.

Then Rabbi Felipe Goodman of Temple Beth Shalom in Las Vegas said that synagogues need to make some congregants feel a reason to become more involved and observant before piling on rules.

At one of the sessions a rabbi said she turned down a pulpit because some of the synagogue members were intermarried.

Jews of Afghanistan urged to come home

NEW YORK — The surprise reference of the new interim leader of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, at a speech here in which he acknowledged the presence of "our Jewish friends" in the audience was being noted with appreciation by Jewish sources. Also after his remarks he approached the group of Jews and said he was happy to see them, shook their hands and urged them to return to do business in Afghanistan.

Outside of Israel the largest group of Afghanistan Jews is in Queens, New York, where some 1000 have settled and in the early 1980s established Anshei Shalom Congregation which follows Afghan customs.

Most Jews left Afghanistan in the 1950s for Israel. Today there are only two Jews known to remain in all of Afghanistan. David Nissani, an emigre from Kabul, told the Jewish Chronicle of London that "he meant what he said. But is anyone thinking of going back to live there? Nobody. Everybody wants to go, in a few years when it's built. But now it's all destruction. We'll wait and see."

He added "Jews have a good memory of the time. There was no persecution.

There was a high quality of life. We don't have a bad taste. But the people who are there now are not the people we knew. There has been too much bloodshed, too much persecution. So we don't know what they are all about."

He added "definitely we'd visit. Everyone wants to. It's the country where we were brought up. I left 47 years ago, but I'd like to go see my roots."

Zeidman heads Memorial Council

WASHINGTON — The new chairman of the Holocaust Memorial Councils will probably be Fred Zeidman, an old friend of President Bush but an outsider on issues of

the Holocaust. Yet Jewish leaders seem pleased. The 55-year-old Houstonian is said to be an extremely committed and knowledgeable Jewish leader.

Jews almost dominate as intellectuals

NEW YORK — Of the top 100 U.S. leading intellectuals 26 are Jewish according to Richard A. Posner, author of "Public Intellectual" as published in the New York Times.

In no alphabetical order they are Henry A. Kissinger, Robert B. Reich, Sidney Blumenthal, Arthur R. Miller, William Safire, Alan M. Dershowitz, Norman Mailer and William Kristol.

Also Stephen G. Breyer, Herbert Stein Tho-

mas L. Friedman, Philip Roth, Milton Friedman, Saul Breslow and Betty Friedan.

Also Paul Krugman, Anthony Lewis, Susan Sontag, E.L. Doctorow, Floria Steinem, Richard A. Posner, Lillian Hellman, David Horowitz, Allen Ginsberg, Jeffrey D. Sachs, Isaiah Berlin and Noam Chomsky.

Posner is identified as a judge, scholar and author.



CONSERVATIVES CONFER — Judy Yudof, the first woman to be elected international president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, confers with Dr. Steven M. Cohen of Hebrew University during a session at the movement's Convention 2002.

Dallas elects Jewish mayor

By MARVIN MIGDOL

DALLAS — Can a city of one million, with only 40,000 Jews, elect a Jewish mayor?

Laura Miller, 43, has won the mayoralty of Dallas in a hotly fought election.

She became the first mayor since 1971 without support of most of the business community's leadership. She finished 10 points ahead of her runoff opponent.

Miller is a journalist who served in the Dallas City Council. Another Jewish Council member opposed her. Few Jews reside in Miller's district.

She is married to Texas State Rep. Steve Wolens. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and was a reporter for several newspapers. She is proud of her Jewishness and is a past board member of Congregation Shearith Israel (Conservative). Miller has been vocal in opposing Christian prayers at public events.

Annette Strauss, sister-in-law of former U.S. ambassador Robert Strauss, was previously elected mayor of Dallas. U.S. Rep. Martin Frost, a powerful Democrat, keeps getting re-elected from a district with few Jews.

The obvious moral: being Jewish is not a handicap in Texas election races. In fact, it could be an advantage.

Congregation to study Islam

ST. LOUIS — For four Thursday night meetings Congregation Shaare Emeth's Dr. Stanley B. Lyss Adult Institute will feature a study of Islam led for the first two weeks by Dr. Waheed Rana, professor of anatomy at the St. Louis School of Medicine. His

topic will be "The Jews and Islam".

For the third and fourth week the subjects will be "Islam, Religion and Politics Today," the speakers to be announced.

The sessions are free and open to the public.

Gloomy prediction on Jewish numbers

JERUSALEM — A gloomy prediction that the world Jewish community could lose six million out of the current population of 13 million to 13.8 million in 2020, and between 12 to 17.3 million by the middle of the century was made by the Jewish Agency if current trends continue.

Figures collected by Hebrew University Professor Sergio Della Pergola and released by the Agency point to a shrinking world Jewish population and an increasing proportion of partly non-Jewish households.

To confront the situation the Agency is setting up a Jewish demography initiative in cooperation with the Hebrew University which will include convening an international advisory committee to oversee research and to increase public awareness of the impact of demographic trends within Israeli society and world Jewry.

As far as Israel the report predicted that the percentage of Jews expected to live there would rise from 38 percent in 2002 to as estimated 45 percent in 2020 and 57 percent in 2050.

Currently over 81 percent of Jews live in the U.S. and Israel while 90 percent lives in the 25 most developed countries.

Abdullah for an Arab state

LONDON — In an article in The Times here, King Abdullah of Jordan called on the Arab world to recognize Israel's right to exist in return for the creation of a Palestinian state. He told The Times that such a collective Arab guarantee is part of a current peace plan being discussed by the U.S., Russian, the European Union, Egypt and Jordan.

Obituaries

Rabbi Ahron Opher, 95, of Jewish Encyclopedia

SARASOTA, Fla.— Rabbi Ahron Opher, rabbi emeritus of Temple Emanu-EL, died at the age of 95. He was editor of the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia and served congregations in New Jersey, New York and Chicago. He served as national chairman of the Interfaith Commission of Religion in American Life.

He was president of the National Association of Retired Reform Rabbis.

Nathan Lerer, a rabbi or not

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — Rabbi Nathan Lerer, spiritual leader of Mt. Sinai Congregation, died on Dec. 15. He left Cheyenne for Denver in 1991 to open a new congregation, Temple New Israel in partnership with a Christian cleric, Donald Wiedman who assumed the title of "rav". It

later became Marilyn Hicker's Happy Church.

The Intermountain Jewish News interviewed him and stated that it was never clear whether he was promoting Judaism, Christianity or a unique brand of both religions.

Dr. Blumberg, won a Nobel

PHILADELPHIA — Dr. Baruch S. Blumberg who received a Nobel Prize in Medicine and had a second career directing the space program's

Astrobiology Institute, died at the age of 76. He oversaw research on the origins of life on Earth and whether it exists elsewhere in the universe.

Clarence Jacobson dies, of Boston Hillel

BOSTON — Clarence Jacobson, long time resident of this city and formerly of Boston, died here at the age of 91. He was the retired president of J. Baker, Inc., a division of National Showes, Inc. and

was president of the Greater Boston Hillel Council. He established the Dorothy and Clarence N. Jacobson Book Fund for Judaica at the Harvard Library.

Dr. Erwin Levine succumbs at age 85

CAMBRIDGE — Dr. Erwin Levine of Springs, N.Y. and this city, died at the age of 75. He joined the faculty of Skidmore College in Springs and chaired its Department of Government.

He enlisted in the Navy in

1944, serving in the Far East in the USS Mount Olympus in the closing months of World War II. He chaired the Springs Zoning Board for many years and was a trustee of the Capital District Hospice Foundation.

Milton Marwil, succumbs at 91

WEST BLOOMFIELD, Mich. — Milton Marwil, a past president of the Hebrew Free Loan Association and of the Detroit District of the Zionist Organization of American, died at the age of 91. He received the Zionist Organization of America's lifetime achievement award and the Detroit Jewish Community's Eight Over Eighty Award.

Rudy Newman, fighter pilot

DETROIT — Rudy Newman, who served as a fighter pilot on the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Lexington and won a Distinguished Flying Cross, died at the age of 74 at his home in Bloomfield Hills.

During Israel's war with the Palestinians he flew arms from Czechoslovakia to Israel. He also was the pilot on one of El Al's first flights.

He made frequent visits to Israel and his last was in the spring of 2000, shortly after he was diagnosed for cancer.

Yeshiva Beth Yehudah honored him with its Golden Torah Award in 2000.

Alan Tichnor, 79, of United Synagogue

SANIBEL ISLAND, Fla. — Alan J. Tichnor, president of Colourpicture Publisher, Inc. of Boston, died at the age of 77. He was a past president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and an honorary trustee of the Jewish Theological Seminary. In World War II he served on both Europe and the Pacific fronts.

Jimmy Wisch, 85, Press Ass'n president

DALLAS — Jossard "Jimmy" Wisch, publisher of the Texas Jewish Post for 56 years, died at the age of 85. He served as president of the American Jewish Press Association from 1969 to 1972. He served in the Merchant Marine during World War II and met his wife while docked at

Boston.

Wisch's death "truly marks the end of an era," noted Robert Cohn, editor-publisher of the St. Louis Jewish Light. Because of the depression he was not able to become bar mitzvah at age 13 but in 1962 he celebrated it in Israel.

Bronfman deplores Jewish youth choices

NEW YORK — Jewish college students might not understand a letter by Edgar M. Bronfman seeking funds for Hillel in which he stated that "more and more young Jewish people are not choosing to be Jewish".

The letter hardly was encouraging as it added also that "Jews are not marrying within our faith and building Jewish families. We are largely ignorant of our religion and heritage. And we — especially our young people — are immersed in American secular culture.

"Quite simply", he wrote, "more and more young Jewish people are not choosing to be Jewish."

But there is a solution his letter stated — Hillel. It lacks funds, he wrote. He then related that Hillel facilities are being built at the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse University, Boston University and Brown University to reach more Jewish young people."

Mr. Bronfman displayed in his letter a dismal view of young American Jews as he wrote that "there are 400,000 young Jewish people enrolled in North American colleges and universities today. Most come to campus without a well-defined Jewish identity."

On the other hand he was optimistic, stating that Hillel is growing. It is becoming stronger. You'll find Hillel on campuses across North America (not to mention the former Soviet Union, Ukraine, Israel and other important Jewish population centers in need of our support) — a sure sign that today in certain quarters we are experiencing a true Jewish renaissance."

Israeli police prevent blast

PARDES HANNAH, Israel — Policemen manning a routine traffic check prevented a major terror attack Sunday near the local army base, next to Pardes Hannah.

Three police officers were wounded in the incident when two of the officers stopped a suspicious vehicle traveling toward the camp. One of the two Palestinians inside got out, and opened fire on the policemen with an assault rifle.

Police returned fire and killed him, then pursued the second man until his car went out of control and exploded.

Spokesmen for a Palestinian militant group claimed responsibility for the attempt. They said one of the suspects had planned to detonate explosives in a suicide attack on the base, while his companion sprayed bullets at the Israelis there.

Israeli authorities also said that earlier that day, they had arrested a Palestinian who was carrying explosives for a suicide attack. He was stopped at the entrance to Ramallah, apparently as he was en route to Jerusalem.

Soldiers

Continued from page NAT 1

to have a chance of persisting.

David Zonshein, a paratroop lieutenant, wrote that in May 1996, his unit searched a West Bank house for weapons, found none, but tormented and beat a 14-year-old boy severely in their efforts to extract information.

Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, who heads the IDF, has responded that few armies facing a foe blended into a civilian population follow an ethics code as strict as Israel's.

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Post & Opinion

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Humanistic Judaism rejects the magical

By SHERWIN T. WINE

Is Humanistic Judaism a religion?

For many people, including many Humanistic Jews, the answer would be no. There is no God. There is no worship. There are no prayers. There is no recognition of supernatural power. A philosophy of life for atheists and agnostics cannot be religion.

But this answer may be naive. It fails to understand the history and function of religion – especially in the lives of people who are products of the modern secular world.

Historically, religion has its origins in two developments.

The first is the human condition. To be human is to confront continuously two persistent and unpleasant realities: suffering and death. If there were no suffering and no death, religion would not exist. The need to cope with these two unwelcome intrusions is the mother of religious belief and religious behavior.

The second development is the human imagination. It is obvious that ordinary power – human power – cannot eliminate all suffering and abolish all deaths. It may reduce suffering and postpone death. But it cannot defeat them in the long run. Human imagination, prompted by human desperation, provides an alternative power so extraordinary that it can only be called magic.

Magic power defies the limitations of ordinary experience. It transcends the restrictions of the natural world. Being supernatural, it does not need to obey the laws of nature. Being sacred, it cannot be measured and cannot be exhausted. As a mysterious and overwhelming force, it can do what ordinary power is powerless to do. It can conquer both suffering and death. Magic and religion have a common origin: the human need to transcend the human condition.

The belief in magic power is reinforced by the uniqueness of the human experience. When we are born, we are helpless, unable to do anything for ourselves except cry for help. When our parents respond to our cries, when they rescue us, wipe us, and feed us, our infant minds perceive their power to be

extraordinary and magical. Since childhood is very long, the addiction to magic becomes a natural predilection that we are never fully prepared to give up. Fairy tales and Harry Potter continue to charm us even when we grow up. Part of us never wants to leave childhood. Part of us never wants to surrender magic power.

But magic and religion are not identical. Magicians seek to manipulate magic power. Religion worships it. Religion emerges when our parents and our more distant ancestors achieve the power to transcend death. They do this through the human belief in spirits of the dead. Since these spirits are familial and parental, we respond to them the way we respond to our mother and our father – with fear and with reverence. Ultimately the spirits of the ancestral dead turn into gods. And the gods turn into God. Worship is the continuation of the awe and the reverence that our childhood connection to parental power inspires. In the end our infant cries turn into prayer. And God remains our heavenly father and mother.

The two themes of religion, then, arising from the origins of religion, are magic power and ancestral reverence. When religion begins, it is attached to family, clans, and tribes. It is not something chosen. It is a set of practices that are inherited, from holidays and sacred symbols to prayer and dress. In most cultures religion and patriotism cannot easily be distinguished. They have the same roots and are inspired by the same attachments. Most people end up in the religious systems they embrace, not because of conscious reflection or personal beliefs, but because they love and fear their parents and their ancestors. Where the ancestral theme is the most powerful, religion can be called ancestral religion.

Sometimes, however, the theme of magic power becomes the central focus. During the past two thousand years, as ancestral ties have been weakened by urban civilization – as individualism and individual identity have been strengthened by mobility and the power of new technology – religion was separated from patriotism and became a matter of personal

choice. Personal immortality and eternal happiness became the major rewards, both of them guaranteed by magic power. In this way an alternative to ancestral religion was born. Because of its emphasis on individual reward, it can best be called salvation religion. Christianity and Islam are salvation religions. Buddhism, in its popular expression, is a salvation religion. The array of modern urban cults, from Hari Krishna to Scientology, are salvation religions. Even Rabbinic Judaism, with its final judgment day, is a salvation religion.

In salvation religion, ancestors fade away and magic power comes to the fore. Rituals, magical formulas, and personal faith release the powers of "the Force." Ethnicity and ethnic memory become irrelevant. Attachment to roots is less important than attachment to the message. The drama of personal conversion replaces the quiet comfort of inherited status.

Of course, salvation religion, if adopted by tribes and nations, can turn into ancestral religion. What starts out as personal choice can turn into an ancestral legacy. What starts out as personal conviction becomes piety, an intense desire to imitate one's ancestors. Most Christians today are not part of salvation religion. They are Catholic because they are Irish, Orthodox because they are Greek, Presbyterian because they are Scottish. Most Muslims today are Muslim for the same reason. Most Jews are Jewish, again for the same reason. Ancestral loyalty replaces supernatural salvation as the primary motive for connection.

Since the Enlightenment most Jews have been ideologically divorced from the salvational message of traditional Rabbinic Judaism. They are not even aware of it. The resurrection of the dead and the final judgment day have no place in their world view. If they think of themselves as religious, it is not because they have firm convictions about the reality of magic power. They are Jews because their ancestors were Jews or because they married Jews. Their holidays and group symbols are not matters of personal choice, but

inherited gifts, warmed by childhood memories and family nurturing. They are Jews because that is where "destiny" has placed them. With Buddhist parents, they would have been Buddhist. While their rabbis struggle to

offer feeble proofs for the "superiority" of their faith, their faith has long since vanished. But their attachment to their roots remains strong.

If Judaism is viewed as a
Continued on next page

Quotation of the week

By RABBI DAVID FEDER

The end of this month will bring with it our annual celebration of Purim and our reading of Megillat Esther. The book of Esther could easily be read as a comedy. Just consider the atmosphere surrounding its reading.

How seriously can one take a book being read by someone dressed in a clown costume or a gorilla head? How much weight can you give to a text whose reading is punctuated by eruptions of noise?

Beyond the setting, the story itself is comic. A queen is deposed for failing to appear naked before royal revelers. A new queen is chosen by means of a beauty pageant. The king appears to be a bumbling fool. The villain plots the death of the hero, only to be hanged upon the very gallows he has constructed himself.

The story, however, is more than comic. Although it does conform to the humorous outline for Jewish celebrations – they tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat – there are very serious issues beneath the surface.

Esther is about anti-Semitism and Jews who can pass. It is about assimilation, its cost and its benefits. It is about finding God in a world where God appears to be absent.

Although hatred of Jews was much more easily identified in the ancient world, it is still alive and well in our contemporary times, albeit usually more covert and disguised. We merely have to look at the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and see the strong anti-Israel or anti-Jewish biases in the media.

The vitriolic anti-Jewish line which runs through coverage in the Islamic world and many parts of the Third World seems almost laughable, beyond caricature, until we remember that people actually believe what is printed there. These same lies, slander and half-truths are printed in the Anglo-Arabic press and are believed not just by the poor and fanatical but also by rational, respectable, middle-class Muslims.

And these same attitudes begin to spill over into mainstream media, from Charlie Reese to Reuters News Service. Granted, anti-Semitism is nothing like it was a generation or two ago, but it is still real.

No other group in America has benefited as much by assimilation as we have. We have lived the American dream by becoming among the best-educated, wealthiest minorities in this country. With the fall not only of the walls of the ghetto, but also of the walls of universities, corporations, country clubs and exclusive neighborhoods, we are now virtually indistinguishable from our gentile neighbors.

Unfortunately, we are virtually indistinguishable from our gentile neighbors much of the time. As a result, traditional Jewish thought and values have become more like rich desserts, to be indulged on special occasions rather than the staple of our diet.

Finally, God is absent from Esther, operating merely in the shadows, the "other place" from which Mordecai hopes help will arrive should Esther fail.

For many today, God appears to be absent. We have become lulled into thinking that the world is wholly the work of our own hands, with a little help from science and nature. And the world feels emptier, the more filled we are with ourselves.

Just as our mystics believed that God had to contract (tzimtzum), pull back a little from the world, in order to create, so we need to engage in tzimtzum, to contract ourselves, to make room for God.

May our Purim celebration of this year be measured by the joy it brings to our hearts, but also by the meaning it brings to our lives.

Rabbi Feder serves Temple Adath B'nai Israel, Evansville, IN.

As I Heard It

Cantor's CD worth owning

By MORTON GOLD

A few months ago I reviewed a CD featuring Cantor Avi Albrecht of Baltimore. As I recall, I did not care too much for the material on the CD,



and I cared even less for the arrangements. I do recall making a kind of disclaimer, to the effect that the material did not do justice to Cantor Albrecht or his voice, which I thought was quite good.

In the fullness of time, a reader sent a copy of my review to Cantor Albrecht. It seems he too had misgivings about that CD and tended to concur with my observations. He sent me another CD, which I am pleased to review.

It's titled, "Avi Albrecht: My Favorites." It has no record label. Should anyone wish to acquire it (and I hope that many do), please call: 1-888-741-5261, or write: 3311 Old Forrest Rd., Baltimore, MD 21208.

There are seven selections in all, with a playing time of 41 minutes (and four seconds). Several of the selections are medleys of various songs. These songs are more than Cantor Albrecht's favorites alone. I suspect many of them are or will be yours as well.

There are several minor blemishes I must mention before getting to the music — all connected with the booklet. There is no booklet. Thus, we have no biographical information on the arranger-performers (Eitan Kantor and Gil Nagel).

These gentlemen, either singularly or in collaboration, arranged four of the seven selections, some more effectively than others. They are also listed as the keyboard performers, a task both did very well.

On the plus side, I must commend him for performing "Dos Yiddishe Lied," by Sholom Secunda. It is really disgraceful that this composer, who was such a major force in Jewish music in the theater as well as the synagogue for more than five decades, should be so neglected in performance today.

That his output should be

reduced to a mangled version of his "Shabbat Shalom" is a scandal that cantors of every Jewish religious orientation should do something about and soon. ("If not now, when?")

It is apparent to me from the very first selection that Albrecht has a sweet, lyric tenor voice. His Hebrew diction indicates that Hebrew is his first language. The styles within the first medley ("Chassidic Joys") are varied and beautifully sung. I do question the inclusion of "Hallelujah" as being Hassidic in character. The arrangement of this medley is by Albrecht and is effective.

The second selection is Secunda's "Dos Yiddishe Lied." This song is given a really fine performance, true in character and honest in interpretation, an interpretation that is devoid of any kind of vocal *shtik* that many singers feel necessary to enhance the written note.

Yes, I did write "the written note." We live in a time when improvisation and embellishment are king, and what is written down is, too often, alas, merely a suggestion. If I hear one more "singer-entertainer" butcher the national anthem by giving it an "interpretation," I will surely puke! This sort of thing is not artistic license; it is a *shande*.

The third selection on the CD is the song "Jerusalem Is Mine," by Kenny Karen. I recall praising Mr. Karen for composing this song, and I do so gladly once again. This is an excellent example of popular or commercial idiom being used to express very Jewish ideas; one could not care less about the style. The sincerity of the union of text with music is both moving and salutary.

The fourth cut is called "Songs of Hope" and is arranged by Albrecht. The medley includes "Vie Ahin Zol Ich Geyn" (Tell Me Where Shall I Go?). While I believe I detected a Germanic hue to his Yiddish before this, I must adjure him for pronouncing the word "*klein*" as *kline* (German) instead of *kleyn* (Yiddish). (The word means small.) This is the way I learned it in Arbitter Ring Schule too many years ago!

This song is followed by "There's a Place for Us," by Leonard Bernstein, which is preceded by a very cantorial bridge passage. The next song, "Gonna Build Me a Mountain," is problematic for me, mostly for stylistic reasons. The medley concludes with a stirring rendition of Ernest Gold's "This Land Is Mine."

The fifth selection is "Stars," from "Les Miserables," by Claude Shonberg. Actually, I questioned his including this song on the CD at first. But I am so very glad it is included. Actually, it is a very spiritual song, even religious, and it receives a very beautiful spiritual (meaning effective as well as restrained) performance by Albrecht.

He also shows off the real lyrical qualities of his voice with "Stars." (I would love to hear him sing some Schubert lieder.) For whatever my opinion is worth, it is the best performed song on the CD.

The sixth song is "Zeide,"

by Yess and Levine. The same song is included on the other CD. I liked its performance the first time around. It is a marvelous song, one which will be effective with any audience.

The concluding selection, "Jerusalem Medley," is arranged by Albrecht. The styles vary in this medley, with some being more appropriate than others. All, however, are well-sung in a semi-kind of style.

In conclusion, this CD contains a variety of songs and styles, some more effective than others. This latter observation is more a question of individual taste (mine) than a statement of fact.

All of the selections are entertaining and all are well-sung. All show off the varied facets of Albrecht's voice and artistic persona. I am glad he sent this CD to me, and I am pleased to recommend it to anyone reading this column.

Dr. Gold may be reached at: 12 Avenue B, Rutland, Vermont 05701-4503, or by e-mail at: drmortongold@juno.com.

Wine

Continued from prev. page
salvation religion, then Humanistic Judaism cannot be a religion. But if it is viewed as primarily an ancestral religion, then Humanistic Judaism is comfortably a religion. Humanistic Jews today are Jews for the same reason that most Jews today are Jews. Their "patriotism" is their religion.

For many "ancestral" Jews, magic power remains a minor theme in their attachment. For others it has disappeared entirely. For many "ancestral" Jews, loyalty to their ancestors is so intense that they are willing to repeat theological formulas and prayers they no longer believe in. For others, the loyalty yields to personal integrity. They are unwilling to say what they do not believe.

Humanistic Judaism is a religion, but it is "less religious" than the more intense forms of ancestral religion. It refuses magic power. And it refuses to affirm what its adherents no longer believe.

Judaism, the historic culture of the Jewish people, is an ongoing legacy from the

ancestral past. Our continued participation in that culture is often motivated by affection for our ancestors. Whether we personify them as "God" or view their creations as human, our sense of roots can be equally powerful.

The Latin word *religio* refers to the binding power of ancestral connection. Humanistic Jews are Jews because of that cultural and religious connection.

Sherwin T. Wine, co-chair of the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews and dean of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism in North America, is the founder of Humanistic Judaism and founding rabbi of The Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills, Michigan. He is the author of *Judaism Beyond God and of Celebration*, a collection of holiday and life cycle celebrations for Secular Humanistic Jews, as well as of numerous Secular Humanistic resource materials. His newest book, *Staying Sane in a Crazy Word Center for New Thinking*, (1995), is available from the Society for Humanistic Judaism (\$25.50 including shipping and handling), as are his other books.

Torah Dynamics in your home!



Torah Dynamics — Pirkei Avot Looks At Life reveals the fascinating world view of the greatest sages and the wealth of their wisdom. A must in every Jewish library, this book provides greater understanding of Jewish values, ethics and tradition in easily understandable language.

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Milk, Honey & Vinegar

My invitation to Bill

By JUDY CARR

In these days of hunger, poverty and ever-rising unemployment, Israel is entertaining Bill Clinton with a \$1,000-a-plate dinner and a suite in Israel's grandest hotel, with servants to do his slightest bidding.

It is Judy Carr's humble belief that the honor of dining with Clinton would be enough, and the guest might be content with a hamburger and coke. If they wanted something grander, chicken or goulash would be enough.

Clinton might be happier to walk around and hobnob with Israelis rather than be stifled in a great hotel.

I was told, "All this is going to charity. Rich Israelis give to charity, and they don't talk about it."

The Jew who does not

want his gifts to charity in the headlines is rare. But apart from that, and supposing this money really is destined for charity, which I doubt, what does the poor and hungry Israeli out of a job see of it?

There is the poor single mother in a distant town with no employment, looking for floors to scrub to buy food. She is not invited to Bill Clinton's dinner, of course, but does she even get \$10 from its profits to buy bread and milk and cheese for her family?

Do these big charity funds, which undoubtedly do exist, filter down to the needy? If so, how do they get to them? How is it handed out?

It would be better still if the money went into some form of work project for these

people, who would be glad to work. Then they could earn well and leave poverty. There are such work projects, some initiated by Americans. Grateful Israelis and those who earn a living from these projects talk about them.

Clinton, if you want to have dinner with Judy Carr, there is a bit of chicken, cooked modestly with vegetables, and a cup of black coffee to follow.

And you won't have to pay \$1,000, will you?

Clinton, I invite you. I look forward to welcoming you. And I can tell you more about Israel than you will learn at that expensive do.

Judy Carr may be reached at POB 6431, Tel Aviv, mx 61063 Israel.

Berlin Diary

Jewish studies thriving in Germany

By ALLEN PODET
Feb. 20, 2002

When I told my brother, Rabbi Mordecai Podet of Waco ('Max' within the family) about it, he was amazed.



"You have to tell people about this," he said. So, here goes:

I was on a lecture tour in Germany about 10 years ago (paid for by Federal Republic grant money, of course), and I found myself staying for a couple of days with a Protestant minister and his family. His daughter, a fairly typical high school kid, invited me to a concert given that night by the school chorale. I would find it interesting, she said.

Well, I had no other plans and thought it might be useful and interesting to talk with some German teenagers, so I went.

The whole program was Yiddish *liedlach*, *heimische* tunes old and new, with a very few Hebrew melodies sprinkled in. The pronunciation (there wasn't a Jew in the chorale, and I don't think there was another one in the audience) was perfect. The form, the intonation, the presentation, all were absolutely authentic.

It was so expressive and...well, Yiddish speakers will know what it was...that I was moved to tears. I looked up and thought, "The Old Joker has done it again. He has brought a rabbi to this place, into a 100 percent gentile environment, to be touched to the heart by a group of fresh-scrubbed teenaged Germans speaking and singing in perfect Yiddish."

My "hostess" told me that Yiddish *lieder* and *ma'ases* (stories) were the specialty of this school chorale. Kids fought to get in. They gave concerts in the district and beyond, and, with the money they made, they had funded a trip to Israel last year. She had barely missed out but hoped to make it this time.

With typical teenage embarrassment, she could not tell

me why she was interested, only that it was a major thing in her life – in all of the kids' lives. Apparently, this was not the only school where that was so. I had a great many questions, but neither she nor her parents (nor the Old One) provided me any answers.

A decade and more has passed. I am back in Germany, founding the first rabbinical school here since the Holocaust. I move in academic circles, since the Abraham Geiger College is allied with the University of Potsdam, near Berlin, and in a formal relationship with the German University System. I also move in social and political circles, as a college rector.

I had never for a moment imagined so much public interest in Judaism, Jewish (and Hebrew) studies, Yiddish, and Jewish music. There are (are you going to believe this?) klezmer bands everywhere, filled with people young and older whose parents and sometimes grandparents were too young to have remembered the Third Reich.

Yiddish as a living language is taught in the universities. It is a required language for the Jewish Studies program at Potsdam, a University of 12,000 students that boasts more than 200 Jewish studies majors.

Last night I attended an academic festival for Prof. Dr. Karl Groetzing, who many years ago was the first full-time professor of Jewish Studies at Potsdam. There was lots of food, wine, candies, seltzer for the initiated, and an evening of humorous addresses, all in perfect Yiddish, with klezmer music by faculty members.

The biggest bookstore in Vienna (why is it that Austria has a more sinister sound to it than Germany?) is called the *Katholische Bibelanstalt*, the Catholic Bible Institute. Fully one third, if not more, of its holdings are in Judaica.

I have now made more than 20 lecture tours to Germany and Austria, all funded, all well attended, all on Judaism. Some lectures were academic, some public, all filled with interested, and often enthusiastic, hearers (and arguers, and debaters and discussers, all welcome).

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About Books

By JACK FISCHEL

One of the most important books to be published so far this year is *The Case for Auschwitz: Evidence from the Irving Trial* by Robert Jan van



Pelt, who is professor of architecture at the University of Waterloo, Canada.

The author was the expert defense witness for Deborah Lipstadt at the Irving Trial on the matter of the gas chambers, which Holocaust deniers contend were not used to kill Jews. In his new book, van Pelt provides the most authoritative assessment of the mass killings in Auschwitz. Indiana University Press (this month, npa).

Harvard University Press has published in paper *The Transformation of Palestinian Politics: From Revolution to State-Building* by Barry Rubin. The author drew from documents in Arabic, Hebrew and English, as well as from interviews and direct observations

to write this important book. (this month, \$18).

This month Yale University Press published in paper four important books dealing with the Holocaust, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*, James E. Young (\$18.95); *Rethinking the Holocaust*, by Yehuda Bauer (\$16.95); *Memoirs of a Warsaw Ghetto Fighter* by Kazik (Simcha Rotem) (\$9.95); and *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy*, by Susan Zuccotti (\$16.95).

Incidentally, Zuccotti will be one of the 17 scholars who will be presenting at Millersville University's 22nd annual Holocaust conference on April 14-15. The conference theme is "Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust." For additional information about the conference contact this columnist at Jack.Fischel@millersville.edu.

In May Yale University Press will also publish *Absorbing Perfections: Kabbalah and Interpretation*, by Moshe Idel with a Foreword by Harold Bloom. The author teaches at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and his book is a wide-ranging discussion of Kabbalah from its mystical roots in medieval Judaism to modern Hasidism. Idel con-

tends that a text-oriented religion produced language-centered forms of mysticism (\$45).

Given the circumstance demanded by the Palestinians that the children of the 1948 refugees be allowed to return to Israel proper has become the main obstacle to peace between both sides, Marrus' book should help to put in perspective how refugees have been treated in the recent past.

White Boy: A Memoir by Mark Naison asks the question, how does a Jewish boy from Brooklyn wind up teaching in one of New York City's pioneer black studies departments? (\$19.95 paper, \$59.95 hardback). The memoir details the author's immersion in the radical politics of the 1960s, including his stint as a member of the SDS.

Fireweed: A Political Autobiography, by Gerda Lerner, tells the story of a leading American historian and pioneer in women's history who was the child of a well-to-do Viennese Jewish family. Lerner was still a teenager when a fascist regime came to power in 1934, and she became involved in the underground resistance movement.

Reform's 60th biennial assembly as it impressed 17 delegates

By MARK BROOKNER

Barbara's and my first experience at a Biennial was a success at many levels. I was proud to be part of the great delegation from Emanu El and to see so many of our members recognized at a national level. I had some sense of what a Biennial was about, but the reality greatly exceeds the expectation. The enthusiasm of the 5,000 or so Jews studying and praying together does rub off and it was easy for me to participate and enjoy the workshops, services and plenary sessions.

While it is impossible for me to single out one highlight, I believe, as I write this five days after returning from Boston, that the Presidential Sermon by Rabbi Eric Yoffie made the strongest impression on me. He is a pleasure to listen to, but more importantly, he laid out some major initiatives to challenge Reform congregations. His focus on Religious Education is one initiative that I hope Emanu El can benefit from.

By BRAD KAGAN

This was my second Biennial, and the thing I liked best about this one is the same as last time: I got to learn what other people in the Reform movement think about all kinds of things. I attended a workshop about how large congregations spend their money, and I learned that Emanu El is pretty typical. I am proud that we choose to subsidize our religious school as heavily as we do, because it means that it's a major priority for us. New, unexpected spending on security is almost universal, which validates our recent decision.

I attended another workshop on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, in which an American pastor who heads up an organization working for peace tried to convey the thoughts and feelings of the Palestinian side to us. A prominent Israeli, of course, disagreed with nearly everything he said, as did I. Objectivity on this issue is nearly impossible, at least for me. Another workshop was about teaching ethics to kids, and was put on by UAHC staff. I learned quite a bit that I can apply with my own children.

Shabbat was a very special experience. Praying with 6,000 other Reform Jews was the highlight of the trip. Hearing different melodies and prayers than I am used to was interesting. I can never get used to seeing Reform Jews daven. Rabbi Yoffie's speech on the State of the Union was very informative and uplifting. He delivered the official positions of the UAHC on issues ranging from school prayer to private school vouchers to civil liberties in the wake of September 11. The focus of his speech, though, was religious school. I realized that as a board member I don't know enough about our religious school, and I want to change that.

By RABBI WALTER

Among the highlights of the UAHC Biennial, two stand out as special for me.

The first was a Talmud study session with Michael Chernick, one of the Hebrew Union College professors. We looked at a text I have read before, but he brought wonderful new insight to it. The essence of the text are the questions, does God pray and if so, what does God pray. The theological insights brought by Dr. Chernick were wonderful.

The second highlight was one of the introductions to a prayer read by one of the leaders at a Shabbat worship service. The reading pointed to a new meaning of the prayer for me, a meaning that I will always have in mind when I recite that prayer.

By RICHARD SCHECHTER

You have to come to the Biennial. There will be 5000 committed Reform Jews in the same place. We will transform the convention center attached to the mall into a spiritual home. Yeah, yeah, year – excuse my professionally ingrained skepticism – OK, I'll go.

And then I was there – and studying text with scholars and chanting old prayers to new melodies. We were captivated as professors, rabbis, educators and congregants analyzed and discussed diverse topics ranging from how best to educate and inspire our children to the current status of church-state relations to tikkun olam beyond mitzvah day. And there were the services – 600 people praying and singing joyously at weekday evening services; 5000 people at Shabbat morning services, many of whom were dancing in the aisles behind 18 different Torahs and a smorgasbord of weekday morning services ranging from those conducted totally in Hebrew to an all men's service led by a rabbi wearing tefilin and playing a drum.

It was exciting and stimulating, inspiring and spiritually uplifting, as well as challenging and thought-provoking. And, in some odd way, when the hurdles that face Reform Judaism were described, it was both depressing and exhilarating, for there are no pat solutions to ensure the vibrancy of our movement two generations down the line, and that means individual temples can be laboratories for experimentation as we seek to make our synagogue a holy community in the service of God.

By REBECCA KATES

College students were there in record numbers: over 250 of us. I was really looking forward to spending the weekend with other college students to whom Reform Judaism is so important that they would go away for a convention in the middle of finals! We had some interesting speakers like Rabbi David Ellenson, the president of HUC. By far, though, my favorite parts of the convention were when all 500 plus attendees of the convention were in the same place at the same time. Having services with that many people at the same time is simply amazing, even if it does mean you are so far away that you have to watch huge screens to see what's happening.

Two highlights for me personally were the Friday night song session and the Saturday night program called Nes Gadol Haya Po – A Great Miracle Happened Here. On Friday night, at least twenty song leaders and performers were on stage playing guitar, singing, and leading the entire convention in song. I was with all the NFTYites and college students at the front of the room doing the dances to our favorite camp songs and it was a blast!

On Saturday night, during the Hanukkah program, little blue and white glowing sticks resembling candles were passed out to everyone at the convention before the last song, which was Light One Candle. It was breathtaking to watch the whole room sing it together while swaying blue glow sticks over their heads. It was like Jews holding candles as far as you could see. That image is imprinted in my mind and is what I will remember most from the convention: 5000 Jews singing together, holding candles and proclaiming, "We will NOT let the light go out."

By SYLVIA BRODY

Reform is to amend or improve by change of form. And so Friday night over 5000 Jews experienced a Reform Sabbath service. This service was almost all music: prayer through music, setting a unique spiritual environment. The mood for prayer was set and I was swept up in that mood. This was a Reform experience.

Women of Reform Judaism's dedication of the first Torah commissioned by women, for women was one of the most moving services I have ever attended! My sisters, from around North America, sang, danced and prayed together at this most joyous event. This was a Reform experience.

The opportunity to meet, talk and exchange ideas on numerous subjects relative to congregation life, enriches me personally. Learning, challenging the mind, a Reform experience.

"Walking the Bible" with author Bruce Feller at a Sabbath study lunch presented me with a personal challenge, perhaps to start my own journey with the Bible. A Reform experience.

The experience of being a "Reform" Jew, for me, is a journey and a blessing!

By PRISCILLA SCHUBE

So I went to the Biennial Assembly of the Women of Reform Judaism – what's that you ask – a long name for a feast of information, connection and religious inspiration! We connected with women from all over the U.S., Canada, Israel, England – and what women they are! I went to workshops for you – to bring back information, and workshops for me – for my personal development – I even gave a workshop to share some of the magic and achievements of our Sisterhood, but the outstanding event of this Biennial assembly was the completion of what we have come to call "the women's Torah."

The writing of this Torah was underwritten by women, the cover was designed by a woman and the Siyum (a celebration upon completion of a Torah) was planned and executed by women. We completed the last words of the Torah and since the Torah has no beginning or end but goes on we then colored the "bet" of Beresheit – the first word of the Torah. Then, we unrolled the Torah into the waiting arms of an army of women. It went across the front of the ballroom and around a second wall. Debbie Friedman sang and those women who had tallit wrapped those who didn't and we sang. As we sang Miriam's song, we erupted into a long line of dancers – as we snaked through the ballroom – the mood was electric! The experience was fantastic but what made it even more special is that the writing of this Torah made possible an undesignated endowment for the future of the Women of Reform Judaism – and I was part of it.

By LINDA KATES

Among the most impressive events for me was the completion of the Torat Nashim, the Torah scroll which was commissioned by the Women of Reform Judaism. Writing a Torah scroll is one of the 613 commandments, and over the last four years many women have had the opportunity to actually write one or more letters in the Torah scroll with the help of the professional scribe who wrote the rest of the Torah.

On Friday afternoon, before the beginning of Shabbat, a Shofar was sounded and the Torah was brought in by a procession of WRJ's leadership. To the accompaniment of music performed by Debbie Friedman, the last line of the Torah was written; then the entire scroll was unwound so that the beginning line of the Torah could be completed. Then, the Ve'ahavta was read from the brand new Torah. Finally, there was a celebration with singing and dancing. It was a truly awesome experience to pray, sing, dance and rejoice with hundreds of other women. This was only one event in five days that included worship, music, study, networking, dancing, displays of Judaica, presentation of a Haggadah and a prayer book that are being written, addresses by many influential speakers, Shabbat meals, and very little sleep! Anyone interested in five days of concentrated Judaism should definitely consider attending the next Biennial.

By FREDDI BLEEKER

I had expected attendance at this meeting would be much smaller than in the past, but was pleasantly surprised by throngs of people! Security slowed us down a little, but how nice that the guards greeted us on Shabbat with Shabbat Shalom. WRJ offered workshops ranging from getting along with the liturgical staff to man-

Continued on next page

Digest of the Yiddish Press

Yivo offers Yiddish courses

By RABBI SAMUEL SILVER

Would you like to take a course in Yiddish? Or would you like to brush up on your Yiddish?

At Columbia University



Yiddish, on four levels, will be taught in a program sponsored by the Yiddish Institute called Yivo. The sessions run from June 24 to July 12. According to the Forward, you might also receive some financial support if you take the course.

The article says that stipends are being offered. Apparently that means scholarships.

For data, write Mr. Yankl Salant, Yivo Institute for Jewish Research, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011-6301 or phone: 212 294-6138.

Reform has its limits

In the Reform movement there are gay and lesbian rabbis. There are also, in Reform congregations, religious school teachers who are intermarried. But the movement

has recently stressed that it will not ordain rabbis or cantors who are intermarried. The Forward quotes Rabbi Mark Warshofsky, chairman of the Committee on Responsa of the Central conference of American Rabbis about this matter.

What happened here?

In a letter to the editor of the Forward, Manya Landman, of Oakland Park, Mich., writes that Detroit had a fine Yiddish club with excellent programs that were cultural and musical. But recently, without explanation, it abruptly closed without any explanation.

In a footnote, the editor writes that the situation is scandalous but doesn't state why. Perhaps a Detroit reader can clarify.

Chaplains valued

This year marks the 140th anniversary of the appointment of the first Jewish chaplain to serve our nation's armed forces.

For a time there were no rabbis serving those in uniform. But in 1861 President Abraham Lincoln authorized the appointment of a rabbi. The first was Rabbi Jacob

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Delegates

Continued from prev. page

aging your money with how to create blessings in between. Morning services were offered in a variety of styles, including a beginner's service (why do those people bend and sway?) The Siyyum on the completion of the WRJ Torah was incredibly moving. To see women who hadn't even known one another before that day wrap each other in their talit and worship together was awe inspiring. The Mi Sheberach tapestries were beautiful, and again, seeing total strangers wrap their arms around each other and support each other was, for me, the essence of Judaism.

Rabbi Yoffie's initiatives on religious education for our children and developing a covenantal relationship between our rabbis and lay leaders hit home for me. The UAHC website has material on both those initiatives.

And - the late night music! And, the wonderful presence of the NEFTY kids and the college kids! I attended a workshop on developing the moral and spiritual life of our children, and the message I took away was this: 1) stop treating the kids as "Future" leaders - they are leaders now. Treat them with respect. Give them responsibility, but also make demands on them. Do you want them to take worship seriously? Then make the services accessible to them, and expect their participation. Do you want them to do mitzvot? Then make it possible for them to do real mitzvot, not just some made up activity because they're kids. And, of course 2) lead by example. Attend services. Do mitzvot.

By MOLLIE OSHMAN

When asked to relate the highlights of my trip to Boston for the WRJ-UAHC Biennial I really had to stop and think. How to pick one or two special experiences from 5 days of awesome experiences is a tough assignment! For me, the dedication of the women's Torah, Torat Nashim, the first ever in Judaism, was more moving than words can say. Shabbat services with 5,000 Jews who love being Jewish as much as I do is also an event not to be forgotten. The joy of Shabbat was everywhere from the security person who wished me a "Shabbat Shalom" to the Havdalah service sung by Cantor Jeff Klepper. I felt as wrapped in Judaism as if I were wrapped in an antique Talit passed down to me from my ancestors. Every Reform Jew

should try to attend a Biennial at least once to see and feel first hand what words cannot describe.

By CAREN COWAN

I had the exciting opportunity to attend the UAHC Biennial convention in Boston. During plenary sessions we were inspired by such speakers as Senator Edward Kennedy, Avraham Burg, the Speaker of the Knesset, and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, the president of UAHC. We attended workshops which introduced us to exciting innovations taking place in Reform congregations around the country in worship, adult learning, outreach, volunteer recruitment, leadership development and social action. Each evening concluded with spirited song sessions led by exciting new Jewish artists. The highlight of the convention was Shabbat, joyously celebrated by 6000 participants. We prayed and ate together, we studied Torah together, we celebrated Havdalah with new and old friends and had a wonderful, rewarding day. The Biennial instilled a renewed sense of community and commitment: we belong to a movement bigger than just our congregation and our commitment to our congregation will benefit from the inspiration and love of Judaism we experienced at Biennial.

By LEWIS KRINSKY

The Biennial is probably the

most comprehensive, well-planned event that any Reform Jew could hope to participate in - incredible thought goes into planning, selection of speakers, program topics and workshop leaders. What stands out in my mind most is the spectre of 5000-6000 committed Jews congregating for Shabbat Services with music, liturgy and commentary without peer.

Rabbi Yoffie's powerful sermon touched on issues on a variety of issues. He implored Temple leadership, professional and lay, to focus intensely on our religious schools and unveiled a plan which will develop new curricula for our schools. He called for renewed effort to make the religious school experience a positive one which leads every student to have a love and deeper appreciation of their heritage as a Reform Jew. I feel his approach effectively attempts to blaze new trails, de-emphasize the saddest and most tragic events of our past and enhance the role and image of our school in congregational life.

Rabbi Yoffie also called for rabbis, cantors and educators to be more focused on teaching and study and not so concerned with leading the congregation in a corporate style, putting more demands on lay leaders to take charge of Temple business in the most responsible manner, putting time to the most valuable

Continued on page 14

Misconceptions

Meal may require 3 blessings

By RABBI REUVEN BULKA

Misconception: Having recited the blessing for bread at the start of a meal, one need not recite a blessing for any food eaten in that meal.



The general rule is that once one has washed the hands and recited the blessing for bread (hamotzi lehem min ha'aretz) to start the meal, then everything that is nor-

mal part of the meal is subordinate to the bread. This means that fish, meat, vegetables and other components are all covered by the blessing on bread, and no specific blessing is needed for these items.

However, there are exceptions to this rule. Wine is one notable exception. Because of its unique stature, wine requires its own blessing (boray pri hagafen), even when consumed in the middle of the meal.

Fruits which are eaten at the end of the meal are also not covered by the blessing over bread, and the blessing, boray pri ha'etz, should be recited for the fruit.

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Israel: As I See It

With optimism, faith we'll win

By SAMSON KRUPNICK

"When the month of Adar enters, one increases his joy and happiness," advised our sages. The proper implication thereof is that one must al-



ways be in a state of happiness, increasing it during the month of Adar and decreasing it somewhat in the sad month of Av, the 9th day of which marked the destruction of both Temples.

While other tragedies in our troubled past occurred in Av, the 15th day of Av, designated as marriage pairing day, was considered one of the two most joyous days, along with Yom Kippur.

Hassidic rebbes have consistently emphasized: "It is a great mitzvah to live in a state of happiness at all times." The Torah commands: "Worship the Almighty with joy and happiness."

The basic requirements for a state of joy and happiness are a determined feeling of optimism, a complete faith that the Almighty is with us at all times, and the knowledge that what happens is for the best, as is expressed in the Talmud: "What the Almighty does is for the best."

The great Rabbi Akivah, a staunch believer in this principle, had a personal experience when he traveled with a donkey, a rooster and a lamp. Denied a place in the town, he camped outside the town. During the night, a fox killed the rooster, a lion devoured the donkey, and the wind blew out the light of the lamp.

With a sigh, he acknowledged, "Mah d'avid Rachmana l'tav avid." ("What the Almighty does is for the best.") He then went to sleep. During the night, bandits attacked the town and killed all the people. Had the donkey brayed, had the rooster crowed, had the lamp been lit, Akivah would have lost his life.

What is right and proper for the individual Jew is applicable even more so to our

entire nation. Optimism and faith in our Father in Heaven has been the secret of our existence during the many generations of pain, sorrow and persecution by virtually all countries where Jews resided in the Diaspora.

We recall that in Adar, on Purim, the Iraqi scud attack ended in 1991. We read the megillah in the synagogue, not in the bomb shelter. In our 53 years of statehood, we have experienced many miracles. Our very existence as an independent state is a miracle with Heavenly protection and guidance throughout.

Today we face another such crisis. In this past year,

Kassam missiles" and a criticism from the Israel response.

This spokesman's comment reminds us of the "evenhandedness" of the Clinton administration and of President Bush before September 11th. It smells of Egyptian, Jordanian and Saudi Arabian influence and possibly of the European Union ready to offer Arafat an independent state.

In his recent meeting with President Bush, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, suffering from a cold and fever, was shocked to find a change, in that the President was not prepared to remove Arafat; indeed, he offered aid to the Pal-

force "to dismantle the Palestine Authority." It is easier said than done. Bombing buildings makes very little impression upon terrorism, as evidenced all year.

As terrorists stage their attacks and are identified, we recommend that their families be removed from their homes, that they be interrogated as collaborators and that their homes and contents be destroyed.

This and similar acts of punishment could deter most terrorists. George Tennet, CIA

director, in testifying before a congressional committee, stated bluntly: "There is no secret plan for fighting terrorism. It is a long struggle, but we shall win in the end."

This evaluation applies to our situation, and we also must face this matter realistically. With unity in our nation, with optimism and faith we shall win!

(Samson Krupnick may be reached at 22 Pinsker, Jerusalem 92228, Israel). E-mail: krup@barak-online.net, or www.jewishpostopinion.com.

Today we face another such crisis. In this past year, we have suffered 1,794 terror attacks, compared to 410 in the previous year. In these attacks, 208 were killed and 1,523 were wounded. The attacks continue. In the past week, eight were killed, including two women soldiers in Be'er Sheva, and over 100 were wounded. The prognostication by experts is for an increase in terrorism. Neither Yasser Arafat nor the Palestinian Authority will cease fire nor will they force Hamas and Islamic Jihad to halt.

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In a new escalation, two Kassam missiles (12-mile range) were fired at two kibbutzim, and a third missile was destroyed. Israel responded with a destruction of Palestinian Authority headquarters. The U.S. comment was a "concern about the

estinians.

Sharon had stated that "Arafat is an obstacle to peace." The President not only failed to accept that approach, he even told Sharon: "Don't make waves." Theoretically, Sharon was to keep things quiet while preparations are being made to destroy enemy number one, Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

In effect, Bush gave Arafat the opportunity to continue terror. It is like telling Bush not to make waves against bin Laden while he makes ready for Saddam Hussein or Iran. We will have to continue to attack terrorists and arrest suppliers and planners of terror in "self defense."

Prime Minister Sharon was criticized by former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for not acting with greater

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Social Calendar

By Jean Herschaft

The popular annual "Purim with Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach," which pays tribute to the soul and spirit of the last cherished Hassidic rabbi, through the performance of his music and stories, will take place on the eve of the Purim holiday, Monday evening, Feb. 28 at 8:45 p.m. in the theater of the LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts (in the Lincoln Center complex, 65th St. and Amsterdam Ave.).

The concert is free and open to the public.

The tribute to the unique spirit of Rabbi Carlebach, who brought Yiddishkeit, East European and Hassidic Jewish music and an understanding heart to the farthest reaches of the world, is part of the Dialogue Forum Series **Rabbi William Berkowitz** initiated 50 years ago. (In later years, we had the privilege to be its publicist).

The Dialogue Forum features interviews Rabbi Berkowitz conducts with guests known for their serious thinking about important issues of the day and their responses to his questions in front of a live audience.

During the Purim concerts, Rabbi Carlebach, too, responded to Rabbi Berkowitz's questions with thoughtful answers. These were followed by his rendition of his musical compositions and the telling of his stories.

"The words of the dialogue were interspersed with musical notes that took Rabbi Carlebach's responses into the realm that words could not reach, the realm of deep emotion," said Rabbi Berkowitz.

"Rabbi Carlebach is no longer with us, but we can draw on his spiritual and musical legacy to scale the heights of emotion. In that way, his heart and soul will be among us, to inspire us, and to bring us to the ecstatic joy of expressing Judaism."

The Shlomo Carlebach Tribute Concert, with moderator Rabbi Berkowitz as its MC, will star performances by internationally recognized musicians - soloists, singers and orchestra - and actors/story-tellers. They include:

Nehama Carlebach, who carries on the musical legacy of her illustrious father, Reb Shlomo; **Eli Kranzler**, who will perform Rabbi Carlebach's music - of which he is a renowned interpreter - with the accompaniment of a group of instrumentalists; **Margot Leverette**, a clarinetist who pioneered in the Klezmer revival; **Robert Abelson**, a concert soloist with famous orchestras and a star in Broadway musicals specializing in the Jewish art song;

David Rogoff, a veteran actor of stage and screen, who will read some of Shlomo Carlebach's stories; and the famous **Frank London Orchestra**, known world-wide for its spectacular concerts and recordings, will be featured in musical renditions.

MC Berkowitz, the Purim concert's "impresario," will share with the audience some of his personal memories of Reb Shlomo, his long-time friend.

As in all of the Purim concerts - open to the public and free - that Rabbi Berkowitz launched in 1975, the audience is expected to sing along with the musicians and to dance in the aisles (The rabbi was a former president of New York's Board of Rabbis, B'nai Zion and popular radio commentator).

Brooklyn Jews pictured

An exhibition of photographs focusing on the "Jews of Brooklyn" opens at the Salena Gallery of Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus on Jan. 28 and runs through Feb. 28. Beginning in the 1940s, the exhibit explores the increasingly broad range of Jewish life in Brooklyn. It combines the work of prominent photographers such as **Arthur Leipzig**, **Jerry Dantzic** and **Harvey Wang**, with talented emerging photographers **Melanie Einzig** and **Jonathan Torgovnik**.

Free and open to the public, the exhibit highlights several strands of the borough's rich tapestry of cultures and shows the diversity of Jewish life - religious and secular, Ashkenazi and Sephardic, Israeli and Russian.

Jews By Choice

This shabbaton was done right

By MARY HOFMANN

My friends Rachel Hadley, Carol Davis and I arose blearily last Saturday and took off on a two hour trek to Temple Or Rishon, a spanking new



temple building in Orangevale, Calif., (outside Sacramento) for our first Small Congregations Shabbaton.

It was a meeting of the minds of knowledgeable Reform rabbis, cantors and educators from all over the country and representatives from small congregations all over northern California. It was a wonderful, wonderful experience - and worth rising for before 6 a.m. (an admission I do not make lightly!).

We led off with a Shabbat morning service led by Michael Remson, Or Rishon's rabbi, and Cantor Josee Wolff of New York. From 10:30 to noon we were riveted by Dru Greenwood, Union of American, Hebrew Congregations national outreach coordinator, who spoke on the subject, "Building Sacred Community in Small Congregations: Honoring Our Gifts and Meeting Our Challenges."

The theme of the afternoon was "The Tachlis (nuts and bolts) of Building Community," with break-out sessions on Welcoming Interfaith Families and Defining the Role of Non-Jews, Creating Mighty Music in Mini Congregations, Finding and Integrating Newcomers, and Accepting New Gifts: Developing Future Leadership.

Now I've been to a lot of these kinds of events, and these were probably the most practical, productive, and inspiring days I can ever remember. The credit goes to Art Grand, a terrific guy and a UAHC volunteer whose goal is to help small congregations. He prepared by hosting a bunch of conference calls among the presidents to find out what we most needed to hear.

Dru Greenwood shared

with us a visual model describing and defining the progression of growth in congregations. The "small" or organic congregations include the family-centered model, under 125 members (we're about 100 members short of that) and "pastoral," or rabbi-centered groups of 200-350 family units. The large, or organizational, models included the "program centered" congregation of 400-800 families and the "corporate" congregation of over 900 families.

experiences in which, in a series of little circles and diagrams, so much became clear about how and why we all do things the way we do... and, most excitingly, how knowing that can enable us to plan and change

I plan to use this as the basis for discussion as our tiny group prepares to meet a future that includes the arrival of the tenth University of California in our town. Talk about future shock!

If you're interested in find-

Each type has its own characteristics and challenges, but it is in the transitioning from one to the next that congregations experience real crises. It was one of those "aha" experiences in which, in a series of little circles and diagrams, so much became clear about how and why we all do things the way we do... and, most excitingly, how knowing that can enable us to plan and change. I plan to use this as the basis for discussion as our tiny group prepares to meet a future that includes the arrival of the tenth University of California in our town. Talk about future shock!

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ing out more about this clarifying and useful model, contact Dru Greenwood at the UAHC in New York or at her website,

Dgreenwood@uahc.org.

Podet

Continued from page 7

Heidelberg, one-time university home of the aristocratic student dueling clubs (the vons with the scars), boasts a full scale Jewish studies program with its own building, library, academic staff, rector, and majors, all part of the University System, all by student demand.

It is not just the big cities. Little towns that feed the university cities frequently have study groups that are interested in Judaica, Jewish lan-

guages, Jewish literature, Jewish philosophy, Jewish theology and ritual. People have been saying for 15 years, that I know of, that it is a fad.

That little high school girl, who finally got into her Yiddish chorale, is now a married mother of two. Pretty long fad. Pretty extensive, too.

Allan Podet is rector of the Abraham Geiger College, allied with the University of Potsdam, near Berlin. He may be contacted by e-mail at apodet@yahoo.com.



It's Arlene Peck!

Selective duty soldiers treasonous

By ARLENE PECK

As an American with strong ties to Israel, I have a tremendous conflict with the subject of "objectors" within the Israel Defense Forces.



I know that those in Israel who will read this will say that I, as an American, haven't the right to speak like this. After all, it's not my children who are at danger. And, frankly, had I had children during the days of Vietnam who might have been of draft age, I would have moved them to Canada. It was, for me a confusing war. I never understood who were the enemy and who were the "good guys."

Ah, but that's not the case with the enemies of Israel. Those who want to destroy it surround the Jewish State.

So, I believe the reservist who signed a letter that ran in the Israeli paper, Yediot, "We hereby declare that we will no longer fight beyond the Green Line (Israel's pre-1967 border) with its purpose of controlling, expelling, starving, and humiliating an entire people" to be treasonous. If this ideology is allowed to take hold it could be the beginning of the end for the democracy in Israel.

Those who encourage this theory, should, in my opinion, be allowed, no encouraged, to move closer to the bosom of their Arab friends. Isn't that what the American turned Taliban, John Philip Walker Lindh, did in his efforts to understand America's enemies better?

Do any of you reading this have any idea what publicity these reservists are giving the world to back up the Arabs' hatred of Israel? What do you think it does when the average person picks up the LA Times and sees a front page spread that continues for two full pages with the heading, "Israel: Army Reservists Protest Military Conduct."

The Anti-Semites at CNN follow up with stories of their own deploring the "cruel and

inhuman punishment that the Israel reservists are protesting, against the 'poor Palestinian people.'"

It doesn't matter that there are tens of thousands of IDF soldiers who are lined up to dispute their behavior. The damage has been done. The publicity that they were able to generate for Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, Fatah and Hamas was tremendous.

When Lindh was arrested in a Taliban cave and it came out that he was a 20-year old from California, my reaction was, "He's probably just a misguided kid who really, re-

more.

Better these university students should mourn the frequent and ever more vicious slayings of Israeli civilians. How dare they worry about the Arabs when their mothers and sisters are being regularly maimed and killed by them?

Incredibly, the traitor who started this protest movement Lt. David Zonshein, bemoans how badly he felt stripping areas clean of groves and trees that were people's livelihood! I spent five weeks covering the war in Beirut in June of 1982 and vividly remember how these terrorists came out

So, I believe the reservist who signed a letter that ran in the Israeli paper, Yediot, "We hereby declare that we will no longer fight beyond the Green Line (Israel's pre-1967 border) with its purpose of controlling, expelling, starving, and humiliating an entire people" to be treasonous. If this ideology is allowed to take hold it could be the beginning of the end for the democracy in Israel. Those who encourage this theory, should, in my opinion, be allowed, no encouraged, to move closer to the bosom of their Arab friends. Isn't that what the American turned Taliban, John Philip Walker Lindh, did in his efforts to understand America's enemies better?

ally, didn't mean it." I was wrong. He is a terrorist and should be punished. Soldiers in the IDF who believe their declaration in that letter are no different. They endanger those with whom they serve.

Israel is a country besieged with Arab terrorists who thrive on killing Israeli civilians. They teach their children that nothing can be better than to strap bombs on their bodies and blow up cafes, shopping malls and buses. These terrorists, whom the IDF objectors defend from Gaza and Ramallah who they don't want to see "humiliated" would like nothing better than to demoralize the Israelis even

from behind those trees like rats after the sun went down and set bombs for when the Israeli soldiers passed. They used those trees as cover to kill his fellow soldiers. Are these the same terrorists these kids from Tel Aviv University are bemoaning their olive trees being cut down? They're complaining because groves gave livelihoods to the neighborhood Arabs?

How does Peretz Kidron, spokesman for the leftist group, Yesh Guvel, justify his consulting such people? I suppose I can compare them to the same self-haters from the ACLU who rushed to defend

Continued on next page

Advice By Edlin

3-generation tug o' war

By RITA EDLIN

Q: My grandson, Brad, is 15 years old and he's a wonderful boy. He usually spends spring break with us, which gives his mother a break after hosting the



whole family during Passover. This year Brad asked if he could spend the rest of the school year living with us. He says he needs a little time away to "find himself."

We live in the same neighborhood, so school would not be a problem. But his parents don't like the idea. My daughter, Nancy, was very resentful. "Isn't his own home good enough?" she asked. I think she's afraid we would give him too many liberties. I don't want to cause trouble, but I would love to have Brad live with us. So would my husband. He's no trouble, and he seems to need a break from his parents.

He says they treat him like a baby and won't "give him space." I'm not sure what that means. He does well in school and he's never been in trouble. What do you think? - J.S., Cincinnati

A: I think he's lucky to have grandparents like you. But I can understand how Nancy must feel, too. Why would a young man who seems to be well-adjusted want to move out of his own home? She must feel as if she's failed him in some way. Maybe she thinks he likes you better. Or maybe she thinks you wouldn't set limits as firmly as his parents do.

If so, it would help if Nancy could think more about Brad and less about her own competence as a parent. And it might help for her to know more about adolescents.

Adolescence is a time for youngsters to begin shaping their own identity as adults. And that means separating emotionally, from their parents. "How do they do that?" you might wonder.

They do that by testing out new ways of thinking, behaving and relating. They may dress and behave outrageously. They may criticize and confront their parents and teachers. They may challenge the basic values they've been spoon-fed since infancy. They may let go of those standards, no matter how sound and solid they are. In short, they rebel — until they are sure of who they are and where they're going. And they can only be sure of that by trying out other ways until they find the ones that suit them.

Some youngsters have a harder time giving voice to their rebellion, especially if they have grown up in loving, supportive homes. After all, how can they criticize parents who have been so great?

Those youngsters may cry out for more "space" as they search for ways they are different from their parents. After all, no young adult wants to be a carbon copy of his parents, no matter how much he admires them. For those youngsters, it's easier if they can spend more time away from home. It's easier for their parents, too.

No matter how well informed parents may be, they can't help feeling hurt and resentful as they watch their teenagers reject everything they've struggled so hard to instill in them. They may know that "testing out" new ideas is one way to cement the old ones. But that takes time and for most parents, it's a painful process.

So tell Nancy to give a little more thought to Brad's request. If he needs more "space," what could be better than spending a few months with grandparents who care? It sure beats having a child who runs away from home or joins a cult.

There might be more to Brad's need for "space" than anyone suspects. So before you and Nancy make a decision, I urge you to consult a family counselor. Good luck.

Rita Edlin may be reached at 2412 Ingleside, 1-C, Cincinnati, OH 45206.



Delegates

Continued from page 10

able use and recruiting more congregations who can bring new resources and strong leadership to the fore.

By RABBI CLOPPER

It was nice to be back in Boston. Having been born and raised there, the Biennial convention was a great opportunity to return to the Jewish community which helped nurture me.

This Biennial was not as much about the past as the future. Those attending were not just talking about meaningful spirituality and love for reclaimed ritual; they were living those values. It was especially evident at services. Each time 5000 voices joined in singing, especially on Shabbat, there was a powerful sense of joy that filled the room. The dancing which took place during the procession of the Torah on Saturday morning was a beautiful sight to behold. The large convention hall had been transformed for those moments into a truly sacred space.

Although the Biennial (and the 3 inches of snow that fell towards the end of the weekend) are now a memory, the experience is one that I can cherish. There are challenges that still lay ahead, but if this convention was any indication, the future of Reform Judaism looks inspiring and exciting.

By EVETA FREEMAN

The Biennial was both tremendously busy and exciting. The Torah Nashim and the Siyum was, for me, the high-

light of all. This Torah has been in production over the course of four years and I was thrilled simply to have the opportunity to participate in scribing it towards the culmination of this process. However, attending the Siyum made it all the more stupendous in a way I had not anticipated. In the presence of this immense group of women, the scribing of both the final and initial lines of the Torah, together with the ceremony of fully unrolling it and then re-rolling it amid joyful singing and dancing was breathtaking. Nothing could have made me feel more united with all Reform sisterhoods, as well as Reform congregations. I am so delighted that I was there to experience the moment.

By CANTOR TUNITSKY

This was my first Biennial as Cantor of Emanu El. I think that our congregation is in the main stream of events in Reform Movement. Our senior staff, music, lay leaders, choirs, teachers and what takes place at Emanu El is, in my opinion, simply the best. I enjoyed all that I saw at the Biennial, it was very powerful, and I was impressed how much influence Reform Movement has in American and in the world. Our congregation plays a huge role in our movement, and I was incredibly proud of that.

By ARNIE PESKIN

I attended the North American Federation of Temple Brotherhoods meeting and was inspired by the award winning

Paperclip Project pioneered by educators from Whitwell, Tennessee and honored by the Jewish Chautauqua Society. The Paperclip Project refers to the special program where school children, beginning in 1998, began collecting 6 million paperclips in memory and in representation of Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Basing their idea on the actions of courageous Norwegians who expressed solidarity with their fellow Jewish citizens by pinning ordinary paper clips to their lapels during World War II. In this Tennessee town where there are no Jews and only a handful of African Americans and Latinos, the educators who created this remarkable project felt that it was their duty to educate their students about diversity and the horrors of intolerance and hate. The students have collected over 28 million paper clips and acquired a German railroad car, similar to those used by the Nazis, to house the paper clips as a memorial.

Silver

Continued from page 10

Frankel of Rodeph Shalom Congregation, in Philadelphia. Since then hundreds of rabbis have been chaplains.

In the Forward, Rabbi Aaron Ben Zion Shurin writes that many in uniform who had not been religious were inspired to embrace the Jewish faith more zealously. As an example he tells of the son of one of his colleagues who went into the army secular and emerged, thanks to the chaplain's influence, devout.

By STEVEN BRODY

There are numerous benefits to attending a UAHC National Biennial. These include both the spiritual as well as the concrete examples of practices used by many other congregations. It's quite an experience to be a part of a worship service with 5000 other Jews. Music, singing and dancing in the aisles celebrating Shabbat. Sizeable orchestras on the stage with choirs and famous Jewish singers. Music that gets you really moving and swaying on your feet. Lots of kids, teens, adults, and seniors dancing in the aisles - celebrating the Torah processional and Shabbat. Something you just need to experience to see a different way to worship. Could this be brought in to our Friday night services? Maybe.

I attended several workshops which are always interesting to open your mind to the experience of other congregations. Examples and copies of successful programs are avail-

able to us to review as models. A large congregation in Alabama (800 members) around for over 100 years was considering a \$1-\$2 million building campaign for new roof, boilers, a/c, etc. After consulting with UAHC development experts they broadened their approach to review the overall needs of the congregation for the future. This included a Strategic Plan (Long Range Plan), use of outside fund raiser, and significant involvement by a cross section of the congregation. They concluded they were thinking too small about building repairs for \$1-\$2 million and ended up structuring a capital campaign along with an endowment fund and targeted \$12-\$14 million instead, and succeeded in raising that amount. This is just a sample of what can be gained by attending UAHC gatherings.

(Reprinted from the bulletin of Congregation Emanu El, Houston.

Peck

Continued from prev. page
the Nazis in Skokie, Ill.

While these aberrational groups of reservists were protesting the military conduct they perceive as against the Palestinian civilians in the West Bank and Gaza, they encourage more suicide bombers. One of the founders of this movement, Lt. David Zonshein, laments how he was raised to be an officer with values. He's upset that he has been turned into a combatant who deals in bloodshed and war crimes. He relates how he now hopes to sign up 500 reservists in the movement.

These renegades desecrate those who have been victims of the terrorists. I find it shocking that those in this "movement" consider defenders of the territories to be war criminals.

I remember when the belief was that these brave souls who moved to those G-d forsaken areas were pioneers.

Now Lieutenant Zonshein feels Jewish settlements should be abandoned and the "occupied territories" handed over to the Palestinians.

It is absurd that thought is even given to aiding and abetting those who give no thought to the "pacifist objections" of these few. In the five years since the "peace of

Oslo" more Israelis have been killed by these terrorists than in the 15 years prior. So, while the Lt. Zonsheins give press to the enemy, the Palestinians acquire more Qassam rockets with a range of five to six miles to hit into the heart of Tel Aviv.

At this writing, the army is relieving these "dissenters" of their commands. I'll go one step further. Traitors such as these who live in a country whose very existence is tied into the mandate of a national unity should be jailed and then deported to one of the Arab countries that would take them. They should also include Peretz Kidron, who is the spokesman for Yesh Guvel, the leftist group that counsels this group.

Thank G-d, there are those like Nir Aburdam who founded the counter movement. Although there are only a few bad apples, and it is not the norm, such publicity hurts. Over 100,000 brave IDF soldiers signed a "counter petition" in only one day. But doncha know which group got the world press?

Arlene Peck can be reached at 3115 Ocean Front Walk, Suite 201, Marina del Rey, CA 90292 or by e-mail: bestredhead@earthlink.net You'll find her on the Internet at www.arlenepeck.com

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Mystery Person

Do you know
who's who?

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- The Mystery Person is a film producer.
- The Mystery Person has starred in several movies.

All Mystery Persons are limited to North American Jews. Winners of the Mystery Person contest will receive a two-month subscription, the equivalent of \$8 if not a subscriber, or, if a subscriber, a two-month extension of their subscription. Once appearing in the contest, that same individual will not be repeated as a Mystery Person. All correct answers are considered winners, not only the first received.

Brigade helped create Israel

Reviewed by RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

The Brigade (An Epic Story of Vengeance, Salvation, and World War II), by Howard Blum. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001 336 pp., \$26.00.

Bestseller author Howard Blum, contributing editor of *Vanity Fair* and distinguished *The New York Times* investiga-

tive reporter, has masterfully combined superb storytelling with meticulous research to offer us the yet best account of an inspiring chapter of World War II, woven around the personal dramas of three incredible soldiers.

The story of the Brigade is

of 5,000 Palestinian Jewish volunteers who as a unit of the British Eighth Army formed in September 1944, arriving in Italy that November, saw action against the Germans from March to May 1945. Proudly wearing the insignia of the Star of David, it was a powerful statement to those who sought to impose it as a yellow badge of shame.

It took five long years of insistent urging by the Jewish Agency to finally be allowed to join in the active war effort and fight those who brought colossal destruction upon their European brethren. Only toward the war's end when the Holocaust's horrifying dimensions emerged, did President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill approve the participation of Jewish fighters as a distinct group, which had been denied by Prime Minister Chamberlain.

The Brigade was assigned to destroy Italian Senio River's highly fortified defenses, and singing on the way to the battle line they met with non-comprehending looks of British soldiers who failed to grasp the Jewish boiling emotions to engage in battle the destroyers of their people.

The Brigade proved heroic, even charging through a mine field and taking by surprise the "master race" soldiers, proving also to themselves that they could overcome Hitler's troops. There is a touch of humor when mules carrying Passover supplies dispersed because of German shelling.

However, their brief combat encounter cost in 57 deaths and 150 wounded came to an abrupt halt to their profound chagrin at Bologna. The British feared that continued Jewish casualties might adversely impact their relationship with Palestine's Jewish leadership, and were concerned that the soldiers' experience might be used against them in the future. Surely the Jews knew that their gained fighting knowledge would come handy when inevitably facing the Arabs.

Stationed in Tarviso where the borders of Italy, Yugoslavia and Austria converge, the Brigade's members had the transforming opportunity to meet Jewish refugees and learn of the enormity of what had transpired. In a visit to the liberated Mauthausen concentration camp they were welcomed by disbelieving survi-

vors as "Jewish angels," for the liberators could not possibly be victorious Jews in military uniform.

Help was elicited from German-speaking Jews serving in the American 301st Intelligence Unit and making up half of its ranks. Having relatives in the death camps, their advice included watching for the SS tattoo under the armpit, which was covered by some hiding in hospitals. Close to 300 escaped Nazis were executed by special Brigade teams "in the name of the Jewish people" in daring operations, including an ex-SS colonel who arranged the flight of his comrades to South America. However, indiscriminate killing was rejected. They turned down a plan by partisan leader Abba Kovner to avenge the Jewish slaughter by poisoning German cities' water supply, causing the death of millions.

Vengeance gave way to the overriding priority to assist the Jewish refugees with the ultimate goal to get them to Palestine. Thus the Brigade acquired 42 trucks and transported 1,000 Jews from the Russian-controlled Austrian city of Graz within 8 minutes of the British taking over.

Ordered to move from

Italy to Belgium and Holland to disrupt the Brigade's refugee operation, it remained undeterred. My own family was among those enabled to escape from Poland in 1946, only a few months after returning from the Soviet Union where I was born.

The Brigade rescued over 40,000 Jewish orphans, returning to their faith and people some left for protection by Christians. A school for children who were in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp was established and as survivor Zehava Brumberg shares: "They brought a young spirit and ideals. School became the home that revived our souls."

138 "Doubles" of refugees were trained to assume the identity of soldiers while the latter remained in Europe on covert missions with new English aliases. Weapons "disappeared" from British armories and were smuggled to Palestine for the approaching war of Israel's independence.

Indeed, the 1948 establishment of the Jewish state owes much to the Brigade's legendary performance, officially and unofficially.

Rabbi Zoberman is spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, VA.

Godless Jew explains why

Review by EDWARD J. KLEIN

God-Optional Judaism by, Judith Seid. Citadel Press, Kensington Publishing Corp. \$19.95

Judith Seid, a senior leader in the Secular Humanistic Jewish Movement, has written a valuable and readable guide for cultural Jews who "feel intensely Jewish and crave the Jewish connection." I thought the title was unusual for a secular Jewish author and I asked her about it. She told me that it was not her idea but rather that of her publicist, perhaps to make the book more marketable.

Her book describes the various streams of Judaism, the real history of the Jews, the real origins of the Jewish holidays and the life cycle events from a secular Jewish perspective.

Regarding Jewish history, she asks: "How can only Jewish history be a product of a supernatural force working on the entire world to influence the Jewish people?" Finding the Torah to be mythology, a historical fiction, she would agree with Rabbi David Wolpe, who shocked much of his conservative congregation in Los Angeles last Passover by stating that according to archeologists, the Exodus probably did not occur.

Wolpe's statement caused a Los Angeles Orthodox rabbi to say that if Wolpe is correct, then the First Commandment would have to be rewritten: "I am YHWH your God who may or may not have taken you out of the land of Egypt."

Secular Humanistic Jews are not shocked by such statements as their leadership has not sheltered them from the truth, be it archeological or otherwise. Indeed, to her credit, Ms. Seid does not pull any punches in this book.

The book goes on to describe the alternatives to the "Big Three" which have at-

tracted Jews, including Buddhism (the Jew-Bu's), Quakerism (some of my best Jews are Friends), Unitarianism, Reconstructionism, Jewish Renewal, Secular Humanistic Judaism and "nothing." She correctly observes that religion divides the Jewish People, but that culture and commitment holds us together.

She describes the Jewish holidays in detail, giving six elements of each holiday, i.e., primitive, seasonal, religious, historical, ethical and national. Regarding Hanukkah, she points out that centuries after the event, the rabbis invented the story of the miracle of the oil, thus giving credit to God, rather than the freedom fighters. For Purim, she states that the book of Esther is a novelette and wonders why the rabbis canonized the end of the story in which non-Jews were slaughtered.

She devotes detailed descriptions also to life cycle events. One interesting observation is the reason for the Ashkenazic custom of not naming babies for a living person for fear that the Angel of Death may be confused and take the life of the younger person.

The final chapter of the book has a section on answering questions and the two appendices have a useful list of holiday resources, resources for mixed race households and intermarried couples, books and periodicals on Secular Humanistic Judaism and an extensive bibliography.

The book is an excellent reference source but is also enjoyable to read from start to finish. It is ideal for anyone who is curious about what may be the best kept secret in Judaism.

Reviewer Edward Klein is a Secular Humanist Jew.

REFLECTION

Heaven, Thou knowest better than I know myself, that I am growing older.

Keep me from being talkative and, particularly, from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from thinking that I must try to straighten out everybody's affairs.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details - give me wings to get the point.

I ask for grace enough to listen to the tales of others' pains. Help me to endure them with patience.

But seal my lips on my own aches and pains - they are increasing, and my love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally it is possible that I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be an angel - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody; helpful, but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all - but Thou knowest, Heaven, that I want a few friends at the end.

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